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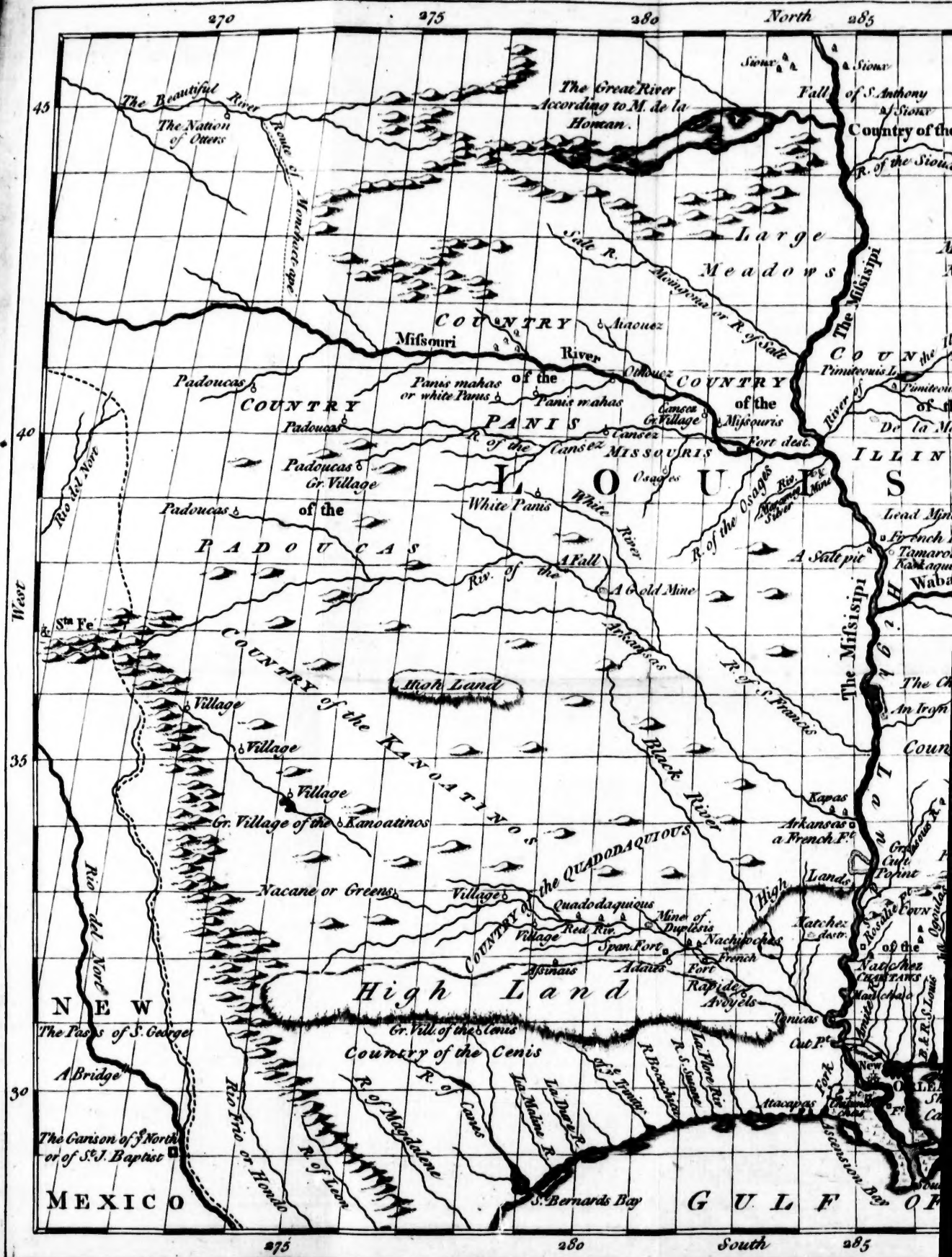
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THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
LOUISIANA.

VOLUME I







A  
MAP of  
LOUISIANA

with the course of the  
MISSISSIPPI,  
and the adjacent Rivers,  
the Nations of the Natives,  
the French Establishments  
and the Mines;

By the Author of the History of  
that Colony.  
1757.

THE  
HISTORY

OF  
LOUISIANA

VOLUME I

THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
LOUISIANA,  
OR OF  
The WESTERN PARTS  
OF  
VIRGINIA and CAROLINA:

CONTAINING  
A Description of the Countries that lye  
on both Sides of the River *Mississipi*:

WITH  
An Account of the Settlements, Inhabitants,  
Soil, Climate, and Products.

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Translated from the FRENCH,  
(lately published,)  
By M. LE PAGE DU PRATZ;

WITH  
Some NOTES and OBSERVATIONS  
relating to our COLONIES.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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VOL. I.

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# P R E F A C E.

**T**HE History of *Louisiana*, which we here present to the public, was wrote by a planter of sixteen years experience in that country; who had likewise the advantage of being overseer or director of the public plantations, both when they belonged to the company, and afterwards when they fell to the crown; by which means he had the best opportunities of knowing the nature of the soil and climate, and what they produce, or what improvements they are likely to admit of; a thing in which this nation is, without doubt, highly concerned and interested. And when our author published this history in 1758, he had likewise the advantage, not only of the accounts of *F. Charlevoix*, and others, but of the *Historical Memoirs of Louisiana* published at *Paris* in 1753, by *Mr. Dumont*, an officer who resided two and twenty years in the country, and was personally concerned and acquainted with many of the transactions in it; from

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whom we have extracted some passages, to render this account more complete.

But whatever opportunities our author had of gaining a knowledge of his subject, it must be owned, that he made his accounts of it very perplexed. By endeavouring to take in every thing, he descends to many trifles; and by dwelling too long on a subject, he comes to render it obscure, by being prolix in things which hardly relate to what he treats of. He interrupts the thread of his discourse with private anecdotes, long harrangues, and tedious narrations, which have little or no relation to the subject, and are of much less consequence to the reader. The want of method and order throughout the whole work is still more apparent; and that, joined to these digressions, renders his accounts, however just and interesting, so tedious and irksome to read, and at the same time so indistinct, that few seem to have reaped the benefit of them. For these reasons it was necessary to methodize the whole work; to abridge some parts of it; and to leave out many things that appear to be trifling. This we have endeavoured to do in the translation, by reducing the whole work to four general heads or books; and by bringing the several subjects

# P R E F A C E. iii

Subjects treated of, the accounts of which lie scattered up and down in different parts of the original, under these their proper heads ; so that the connection between them, and the accounts of any one subject, may more easily appear.

This, it is presumed, will appear to be a subject of no small consequence and importance to this nation, especially at this time. The countries here treated of, have not only by right always belonged to *Great Britain*, but part of them is now acknowledged to it by the former usurpers : And it is to be hoped, that the nation may now reap some advantages from those countries, on which it has expended so many millions ; which there is no more likely way to do, than by making them better known in the first place, and by learning from the experience of others, what they do or are likely to produce, that may turn to account to the nation.

It has been generally suspected, that this nation has suffered much, from the want of a due knowledge of her dominions in *America*, which we should endeavour to prevent for the future. If that may be said of any part of *America*, it certainly may of those countries, which have



been called by the *French Louisiana*. They have not only included under that name all the western parts of *Virginia* and *Carolina*; and thereby imagined, that they had, from this nominal title, a just right to those antient dominions of the crown of *Britain*: but what is of worse consequence perhaps, they have equally deceived and imposed upon many, by the extravagant hopes and unreasonable expectations they had formed to themselves, of the vast advantages they were to reap from those countries, as soon as they had usurped them; which when they came to be disappointed in, they ran from one extreme to another, and condemned the country as good for nothing, because it did not answer the extravagant hopes they had conceived of it; and we seem to be misled by their prejudices, and to be drawn into mistakes by their artifice or folly. Because the *Mississipi* scheme failed in 1719, every other reasonable scheme of improving that country, and of reaping any advantage from it, must do the same. It is to wipe off these prejudices, that the following account of these countries, which appears to be both just and reasonable, and agreeable to every thing we know of *America*, may be the more necessary.

We

We have been long ago told by *F. Charlevoix*, from whence it is, that many people have formed a contemptible opinion of this country, that lies on and about the *Mississipi*. They are misled, says he, by the relations of some seafaring people, and others, who are no manner of judges of such things, and have never seen any part of the country but the coast side, about *Mobile*, and the mouths of the *Mississipi*; which our author here tells us is as dismal to appearance, the only thing those people are capable of judging of, as the interior parts of the country, which they never saw, are delightful, fruitful, and inviting. They tell us, besides, that the country is unhealthful; because there happens to be a marsh at the mouth of the *Mississipi*, (and what river is there without one?) which they imagine must be unhealthful, rather than that they know it to be so; not considering, that all the coast both of *North* and *South America* is the same; and not knowing, that the whole continent, above this single part on the coast, is the most likely, from its situation, and has been found by all the experience that has been had of it, to be the most healthy part of all *North America* in the same climates, as will abundantly appear from the following and all other accounts.

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To give a general view of those countries, we should consider them as they are naturally divided into four parts; 1. the sea coast; 2. the Lower *Louisiana*, or western part of *Carolina*; 3. the Upper *Louisiana*, or western part of *Virginia*; and 4. the river *Mississipi*.

I. The sea coast is the same with all the rest of the coast of *North America* to the southward of *New York*, and indeed from thence to *Mexico*, as far as we are acquainted with it. It is all a low flat sandy beach, and the soil for some twenty or thirty miles distance from the shore, more or less, is all a *pine barren*, as it is called, or a sandy desert; with few or no good ports or harbours on the coast, especially in all those southern parts of *America*, from *Chesapeak* bay to *Mexico*. But however barren this coast is in other respects, it is entirely covered with tall pines, which afford great store of *pitch*, *tar*, and *turpentine*. These pines likewise make good masts for ships; which I have known to last for twenty odd years, when it is well known, that our common masts of the *New England* white pine will often decay in three or four years. These masts were of that kind; that is called the *pitch pine*, and *lightwood pine*; of which I knew a ship built that ran for sixteen

teen years, when her planks of this pine were as sound and rather harder than at first, altho' her oak timbers were rotten. The *cypress*, of which there is such plenty in the swamps on this coast, is reckoned to be equally serviceable, if not more so, both for masts (of which it would afford the largest of any tree that we know), and for ship building. And ships might be built of both these timbers for half the price perhaps of any others, both on account of the vast plenty of them, and of their being so easily worked.

In most parts of these coasts likewise, especially about the *Missisipi*, there is great plenty of *cedars* and *ever-green oaks*; which make the best ships of any that are built in *North America*. And we suspect it is of these *cedars*, and the *American cypress*, that the *Spaniards* build their ships of war at the *Havana*. Of these there is the greatest plenty, immediately to the westward of the mouth of the *Missisipi*; where "large vessels can go to the lake of the *Chattamachas*, and nothing hinders them to go and cut the finest oaks in the world, with which all that coast is covered;" \* which, moreover,

\* *Charlevoix Hist. N. France*, Tom. III. p. 444.

is a sure sign of a very good instead of a bad soil; and accordingly we see the *French* have settled their tobacco plantations thereabouts. It is not without reason then, that our author tells us, the largest navies might be built in that country at a very small expence.

From this it appears, that even the sea coast, barren as it is, from which the whole country has been so much depreciated, is not without its advantages, and those peculiarly adapted to a trading and maritime nation. Had these sandy deserts indeed been in such a climate as *Canada*, they would have been of as little value, as many would make them here. It might be difficult indeed to settle colonies merely for these or any other productions of those poor lands: but to the westward of the *Mississipi*, the coast is much more fruitful all along the bay of *Mexico*; being watered with a great number of rivers, the banks of which are very fertile, and are covered with forests of the tallest oaks, &c. as far as to *New-Mexico*, a thing not to be seen any where else on these coasts. That coast alone will supply all the products of *North America*, and is as convenient to navigation as any part of it, without going nigh the *Mississipi*; so that it is with good reason



# P R E F A C E. ix,

our author says, " That country promises  
" great riches to such as shall inhabit it, from  
" the excellent quality of its lands \*", in such  
a climate.

These are the productions of the dry (we  
cannot call them high) grounds: the swamps,  
with which this coast abounds, are still more  
fruitful, and abundantly compensate the avidity  
and barrenness of the soil around them. They  
bear rice in such plenty, especially the *marsh*  
*about New-Orleans*, " That the inhabitants  
" reap the greatest advantage from it, and  
" reckon it the manna of the land †." It was  
such marshes on the *Nile*, in the same climate,  
that were the granary of the *Roman* empire.  
And from a few such marshes in *Carolina*, not  
to be compared to those on the *Mississipi*, either  
in extent or fertility, *Britain* receives at least two  
or three hundred thousand pounds a-year, and  
might vend twice that value of their products.

But however barren or noxious these low  
lands on the sea coast may be, they extend but  
a little way about the *Mississipi*, not above thirty  
or forty miles in a straight line, on the east:

\* Vol. I. p. 270.

† *Dumont*, I. 15.

x. P R E F A C E.

side of that river, and about twice as far on the west side; in which last, the lands are, in recompence, much more fruitful. To follow the course of the river indeed, which runs very obliquely south-east and north-west, as well as crooked, they reckon it eighty two leagues from the mouth of the river to the *Cut-Roint*, where the high lands begin.

II. By the *Lower Louisiana*, our author means only the *Delta* of the *Mississipi*, or the drowned lands made by the overflowing of the river. But we may more properly give that appellation to the whole country, from the low and flat sea coast above described, to the mountains, which begin about the latitude  $35^{\circ}$ , a little above the river *St. Francis*; that is, five degrees of latitude, or 350 statute miles, from the coast; which they reckon to be 660 miles up the *Mississipi*. About that latitude a continued ridge of mountains runs westward from the *Apalachean* mountains nigh to the banks of the *Mississipi*, which are thereabouts very high, at what we have called the *Chicasaw Cliffs*. Opposite to these on the west side of the *Mississipi* the country is mountainous, and continues to be so here and there as far as we have any accounts of it, westward to the mountains of

New-

*New-Mexico*; which run in a chain of continued ridges from north to south, and are reckoned to divide that country from *Louisiana*, about 900 miles west from the *Mississipi*.

This is one entire level champaign country; the part of which that lies west of the *Mississipi* is 900 miles (of sixty to a degree) by 300, and contains 270,000 square miles, as much as both *France* and *Spain* put together. This country lies in the latitude of those fruitful regions of *Barbary*, *Syria*, *Persia*, *India*, and the middle of *China*, and is alone sufficient to supply the world with all the products of *North America*. It is very fertile in every thing, both in lands and metals, by all the accounts we have of it; and is watered by several large navigable rivers, that spread over the whole country from the *Mississipi* to *New-Mexico*; besides several smaller rivers on the coast west of the *Mississipi*, that fall into the bay of *Mexico*; of which we have no good accounts, if it be not that Mr. *Coxe* tells us of one, the river of the *Genis*, which, he says, "is broad, deep, and  
"navigable almost to its heads, which chiefly  
"proceed from the ridge of hills that separate  
"this province from *New-Mexico* \*," and

\* Description of *Carolina*, p. 37.

runs through the rich and fertile country on the coast abovementioned.

The western part of this country is more fertile, says our author, than that on the east side of the *Mississipi*; in which part, however, says he, the lands are very fertile, with a rich black mould three feet deep on the hills, and much deeper in the bottoms, with a strong clayey foundation. Reeds and canes even grow upon the hill sides; which, with the oaks, walnuts, tulip-trees, &c. are a sure sign of a good and rich soil. And all along the *Mississipi* on both sides, *Dumont* tells, "The lands, which are all free from inundations, are excellent for culture, particularly those about *Baton Rouge*, *Cut-Point*, *Arkansas*, *Natches*, and *Yasous*, which produce *Indian Corn*, *Tobacco*, *Indigo*, &c. and all kinds of provisions and esculent plants, with little or no care or labour, and almost without culture; the soil being in all those places a black mould of an excellent quality \*."

These accounts are confirmed by our own people, who were sent by the government of

\* *Memoires*, I. 16.

*Virginia* in 1742, to view these the western parts of that province; and altho' they only went down the *Ohio* and *Mississipi* to *New-Orleans*, they reported, that "they saw more " good land on the *Mississipi*, and its many large " branches, than they judge is in all the *English* colonies, as far as they are inhabited;" as appears from the report of that government to the board of trade.

What makes this fertile country more eligible and valuable, is, that it appears both from its situation, and from the experience the *French* have had of it\*, to be by far the most healthful of any in all these southern parts of *North America*; a thing of the last consequence in settling colonies, especially in those southern parts of *America*, which are in general very unhealthy. All the sea coasts of our colonies, to the southward of *Chesapeak* bay, or even of *New-York*, are low and flat, marshy and swampy, and very unhealthy on that account: and those on and about the bay of *Mexico*, and in *Florida*, are withal excessively hot and intemperate, so that white people are unfit for labour in them; by which all our southern co-

\* See Vol. I. p. 201, 202.

lonies, which alone promise to be of any great advantage to the nation, are so thin of people, that we have but 25,000 white people in all *South Carolina* \*. But those lands on the *Mississippi* are, on the contrary, high, dry, hilly, and in some places mountainous at no great distance from the river, besides the ridges of the *Apalachean* mountains abovementioned, that lie to the northward of them; which must greatly refresh and cool the air over all the country, especially in comparison of what it is on the low and flat, sandy and parched, sea coasts of our present colonies. These high lands begin immediately above the *Delta*, or drowned lands, at the mouth of the *Mississippi*; above which the banks of that river are from 100 to 200 feet high, without any marshes about them; and continue such for 100 miles to the river *Ohio*, especially on the east side of the river †.

Such a situation on rich and fertile lands in that climate, and on a navigable river, must appear to be of the utmost consequence. It is only from the rich lands on river sides (which indeed are the only lands that can generally be

\* Description of *South Carolina*, by ——— p. 50.

† See Vol. I. chap. IV. p. 262.



called rich in all countries, and especially in *North America*), that this nation reaps any thing of value from all the colonies it has in that part of the world. But "rich lands on river sides" in hot climates are extremely unhealthful," says a very good judge\*, and we have often found to our cost. How ought we then to value such rich and healthful countries on the *Mississipi*? As much surely as some would depreciate and vilify them. It may be observed, that all the countries in *America* are only populous in the inland parts, and generally at a distance from navigation; as the sea coasts both of *North* and *South America* are generally low, damp, excessively hot, and unhealthful; at least in all the southern parts, from which alone we can expect any considerable returns. Instances of this may be seen in the adjacent provinces of *Mexico*, *New-Mexico*, *Terra Firma*, *Peru*, *Quito*, &c. and far more in our southern colonies, which never became populous, till the people removed to the inland parts, at a distance from the sea. This we are in a manner prevented to do in our colonies, by the mountains which surround us, and confine us to the coast; whereas on the *Mississipi* the

\* *Arbutnot on Air. App.*

whole continent is open to them, and they have, besides, this healthy situation on the lower parts of that river, at a small distance from the sea.

If those things are duly considered, it will appear, that they who are possessed of the *Mississippi*, will in time command that continent; and that we shall be confined, on the sea coasts of our colonies, to that unhealthful situation, which many would persuade us is so much to be dreaded on the *Mississippi*. It is by this means that we have so very few people in all our southern colonies; and have not been able to get in 100 years above 25,000 people in *South Carolina*; when the *French* have not less than eighty or ninety thousand in *Canada*, besides ten or twelve thousand on the *Mississippi*, to oppose to them. The low and drowned lands indeed about the mouth of the *Mississippi* must no doubt be more or less unhealthful; but they are far from being so very pernicious, as many would represent them. The waters there are fresh, which we know, by manifold experience in *America*, are much less prejudicial to health than the offensive fetid marshes, that are to be found every where else on the salt waters. Accordingly we are credibly informed, that some of the

the inhabitants even of *New-Orleans* say, they never enjoyed better health even in *France*; and for that reason they invite their countrymen, in their letters to them, we are told, to come and partake of the salutary benefits of that delightful country. The clearing, draining, and cultivating of those low lands, must make a very great change upon them, from the accounts we have had of them in their rude and uncultivated state.

III. The *Upper Louisiana* we call that part of the continent, which lies to the northward of the mountains abovementioned in latitude  $35^{\circ}$ . This country is in many places hilly and mountainous, for which reason we cannot expect it to be so fertile as the plains below it. But those hills on the west side of the *Mississipi* are generally suspected to contain mines, as well as the mountains of *New-Mexico*, of which they are a continuation. But the fertile plains of *Louisiana* are perhaps more valuable than all the mines of *Mexico*; which there would be no doubt of, if they were duly cultivated. They will breed and maintain ten times as many people, and supply them with many more necessaries, and articles of trade and navigation, than the richest mines of *Peru*.

The

The most important place in this country, and perhaps in all *North America*, is at the *Forks of the Mississippi*, where the *Ohio* falls into that river; which, like another ocean, is the general receptacle of all the rivers that water the interior parts of that vast continent. Here those large and navigable rivers, the *Ohio*, river of the *Cherokees*, *Wabache*, *Illinois*, *Missouri*, and *Mississippi*, besides many others, which spread over that whole continent, from the *Apalachean* mountains to the mountains of *New-Mexico*, upwards of 1000 miles, both north, south, east, and west, all meet together at this spot; and that in the best climate, and one of the most fruitful countries, of any in all that part of the world; in the latitude  $37^{\circ}$ , the latitude of the Capes of *Virginia*, and of *Santa Fé* the capital of *New-Mexico*. By that means there is a convenient navigation to this place from our present settlements to *New-Mexico*; and from all the inland parts of *North America*, farther than we are acquainted with it; And all the natives of that continent, those old friends and allies of the *French*, have by that means a free and ready access to this place; nigh to which the *French* formed a settlement, to secure their interest on the frontiers of all our southern colonies. In short this place

place is in the center of that vast continent, and of all the nations in it, and seems to be intended by nature to command them both; for which reason it ought no longer to be neglected by *Britain*. As soon as we pass the *Apalachean* mountains, this seems to be the most proper place to settle at; and was pitched upon for that purpose, by those who were the best acquainted with those countries, and the proper places of making settlements in them, of any we know. And if the settlements at this place had been made, as they were proposed, about twenty years ago, they might have prevented, or at least frustrated, the late attempts to wrest that country, and the territories of the *Ohio*, out of the hands of the *English*; and they may do the same again.

But many will tell us, that those inland parts of *North America* will be of no use to *Britain*, on account of their distance from the sea, and inconvenience to navigation. That indeed might be said of the parts which lie immediately beyond the mountains, as the country of the *Cherokees*, and *Ohio Indians* about *Pittsburg*, the only countries thereabouts that we can extend our settlements to; which are so inconvenient to navigation, that nothing can be brought from them across

across the mountains, at least none of those gross commodities, which are the staple of *North America*; and they are as inconvenient to have any thing carried from them, nigh 2000 miles, down the river *Ohio*, and then by the *Mississipi*. For that reason those countries, which we look upon to be the most convenient, are the most inconvenient to us of any, altho' they join upon our present settlements. It is for these reasons, that the first settlements we make beyond the mountains, that is, beyond those we are now possessed of, should be upon the *Mississipi*, as we have said, convenient to the navigation of that river; and in time those new settlements may come to join to our present plantations; and we may by that means reap the benefit of all those inland parts of *North America*, by means of the navigation of the *Mississipi*, which will be secured by this post at the *Forks*. If that is not done, we cannot see, how any of those inland parts of *America*, and the territories of the *Ohio*, which were the great objects of the present war, can ever be of any use to *Britain*, as the inhabitants of all those countries can otherwise have little or no correspondence with it.

IV. This



IV. This famous river, the *Mississipi*, is navigable upwards of 2000 miles, to the falls of *St. Anthony* in latitude 45°, the only fall we know in it, which is 16 degrees of latitude above its mouth ; and even above that fall, our author tells us, there is thirty fathom of water in the river, with a proportionable breadth. About 1000 miles from its mouth it receives the river *Ohio*, which is navigable 1000 miles farther, some say 1500, nigh to its source, not far from Lake *Ontario* in *New-York*; in all which space there is but one fall or rapide in the *Ohio*, and that navigable both up and down, at least in canoes. This fall is 300 miles from the *Mississipi*, and 1300 from the sea, with five fathom of water up to it. The other large branches of the *Ohio*, the river of the *Cherokees*, and *Wabache*, afford a like navigation, from lake *Erie* in the north to the *Cherokees* in the south, and from thence to the bay of *Mexico*, by the *Mississipi* : not to mention the great river *Missouri*, which runs to the northwest parts of *New-Mexico*, much farther than we have any good accounts of that continent. From this it appears, that the *Mississipi* affords the most extensive navigation of any river we know ; so that it may justly be compared to an inland sea, which spreads over nine tenths

tenths of all the continent of *North America*; all which the *French* pretended to lay claim to, for no other reason but because they were possessed of a paltry settlement at the mouth of this river.

If those things are considered, the importance of the navigation of the *Mississipi*, and of a port at the mouth of it, will abundantly appear. Whatever that navigation is, good or bad, it is the only one for all the interior parts of *North America*, which are as large as a great part of *Europe*; no part of which can be of any service to *Britain* without the navigation of the *Mississipi*, and settlements upon it. It is not without reason then, that we say, whoever are possessed of this river, and of the vast tracts of fertile lands upon it, must in time command that continent, and the trade of it, as well as all the natives in it, by the supplies which this navigation will enable them to furnish those people. By those means, if the *French*, or any others, are left in possession of the *Mississipi*, while we neglect it, they must command all that continent beyond the *Apalachean* mountains, and disturb our settlements much more than ever they did, or were able to do; the very thing they engaged in this war to accomplish, and we to prevent.

The

The *Mississipi* indeed is rapid for 1200 miles, as far as to the *Missouri*, which makes it difficult to go up the river by water. For that reason the *French* have been used to quit the *Mississipi* at the river *St. Francis*, from which they have a nigher way to the *Forks of the Mississipi* by land. But however difficult it may be to ascend the river, it is, notwithstanding, often done; and its rapidity facilitates a descent upon it, and a ready conveyance for those gross commodities, which are the chief staple of *North America*, from the most remote places of the continent above-mentioned: And as for lighter *European* goods, they are more easily carried by land, as our *Indian* traders do, over great part of the continent, on their horses, of which this country abounds with great plenty.

The worst part of the navigation, as well as of the country, is reckoned to be at the mouth of the river; which, however, our author tells us, is from seventeen to eighteen feet deep, and will admit ships of 500 tons, the largest generally used in the plantation trade. And even this navigation might be easily mended, not only by clearing the river of a narrow bar in the passes, which our author, *Charlevoix*, and others, think might be easily done; but likewise

The

likewise by means of a bay, described by Mr. *Coxe*, from the actual survey of his people, lying to the westward of the south pass of the river; which, he says, has from twenty-five to six fathom water in it, close to the shore, and not above a mile from the *Mississipi*, above all the shoals and difficult passes in it, and where the river has 100 feet of water. By cutting through that one mile then, it would appear, that a port might be made there for ships of any burden; the importance of which is evident, from its commanding all the inland parts of *North America* on one side, and the pass from *Mexico* on the other; so as to be preferable in these respects even to the *Havana*; not to mention that it is fresh water, and free from worms, which destroy all the ships in those parts.

And as for the navigation from the *Mississipi* to *Europe*, our author shews, that voyage may be performed in six weeks; which is as short a time as our ships generally take to go to and from our colonies. They go to the *Mississipi* with the trade winds, and return with the currents.

It would lead us beyond the bounds of a preface, to shew the many advantages of those lands on the *Mississipi* to *Britain*, or the necessity of

possessing them. That would require a treatise by itself, of which we can only give a few abstracts in this place. For this purpose we should compare those lands with our present colonies; and should be well informed of the quantity and condition of the lands we already possess, before we can form any just judgment of what may be farther proper or requisite.

Our present possessions in *North America* between the sea and mountains appear, from many surveys and actual mensurations, as well as from all the maps and other accounts we have of them, to be at a medium about three degrees of longitude, or 140 miles broad, in a straight line: and they extend from *Georgia*, in latitude  $32^{\circ}$ , to the bay of *Fundi*, in latitude  $45^{\circ}$  (which is much farther both north and south than the lands appear to be of any great value); which makes 13 degrees difference of latitude, or 780 miles: This length multiplied by the breadth 140, makes 109,200 square miles. This is not above as much land as is contained in *Britain* and *Ireland*; which, by *Templeman's* survey, make 105,634 square miles. Instead of being as large as a great part of *Europe* then, as we are commonly told, all the lands we possess in *North America*, between

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the sea and mountains, do not amount to much more than these two islands. This appears farther, from the particular surveys of each of our colonies, as well as from this general estimate of the whole.

Of these lands which we thus possess, both the northern and southern parts are very poor and barren, and produce little or nothing, at least for *Britain*. It is only in our middle plantations, *Virginia*, *Maryland*, and *Carolina*, that the lands produce any staple commodity for *Britain*, or that appear to be fit for that purpose. In short, it is only the more rich and fertile lands on and about *Chesapeak* bay, with a few swamps in *Carolina*, like the lands on the *Mississipi*, that turn to any great account to this nation in all *North America*, or that are ever likely to do it. This makes the quantity of lands that produce any staple commodity for *Britain* in *North America* incredibly small, and vastly less than what is commonly imagined. It is reckoned, that there are more such lands in *Virginia*, than in all the rest of our colonies; and yet it appeared from the public records, about twenty-five years ago, that there was not above as much land patented in that colony, which is at the same time the oldest of any in



all *North America*, than is in the county of *Yorkshire* in *England*, to wit; 4684 square miles; altho' the country was then settled to the mountains.

If we examine all our other colonies, there will appear to be as great a scarcity and want of good lands in them, at least to answer the great end of colonies, the making of a staple commodity for *Britain*. In short, our colonies are already settled to the mountains, and have no lands, either to extend their settlements, as they increase and multiply; to keep up their plantations of staple commodities for *Britain*; or to enlarge the *British* dominions by the number of foreigners that remove to them; till they pass those mountains, and settle on the *Mississipi*.

This scarcity of land in our colonies proceeds from the mountains, with which they are surrounded, and by which they are confined to this narrow tract, and a low vale, along the sea side. The breadth of the continent from the *Atlantic* ocean to the *Mississipi*, appears to be about 600 miles (of 60 to a degree) of which there is about 140 at a medium, or 150 at most, that lies between the sea and mountains; and there is such another and rather more fer-

tile tract of level and improveable lands, about the same breadth, between the western parts of those mountains and the *Mississipi*: so that the mountainous country which lies between these two, is equal to them both, and makes one half of all the lands between the *Mississipi* and *Atlantic* ocean; if we except a small tract of a level champaign country upon the heads of the *Ohio*, which is possessed by the *Six Nations*, and their dependants. These mountainous and barren desarts, which lie immediately beyond our present settlements, are not only unfit for culture themselves, and so inconvenient to navigation, whether to the ocean, or to the *Mississipi*, that little or no use can be made of them; but they likewise preclude us from any access to those more fertile lands that lie beyond them, which would otherwise have been occupied long ago, but never can be settled, so at least as to turn to any account to *Britain*, without the possession and navigation of the *Mississipi*; which is, as it were, the sea of all the inland parts of *North America* beyond the *Apalachean* mountains, without which those inland parts of that continent can never turn to any account to this nation.

It is this our situation in *North America*, that renders all that continent beyond our present settlements

lements of little or no use, at least to *Britain*; and makes the possession of the *Mississippi* absolutely necessary to reap the benefit of it. We possess but a fourth part of the continent between that river and the ocean; and but a tenth part of what lies east of *Mexico*; and can never enjoy any great advantages from any more of it, till we settle on the *Mississippi*.

How necessary such settlements on the *Mississippi* may be, will farther appear from what we possess on this side of it. The lands in *North America* are in general but very poor or barren; and if any of them are more fertile, the soil is light and shallow, and soon worn out with culture. It is only the virgin fertility of fresh lands, such as those on the *Mississippi*, that makes the lands in *North America* appear to be fruitful, or that renders them of any great value to this nation. But such lands in our colonies, that have hitherto produced their staple commodities for *Britain*, are now exhausted and worn out, and we meet with none such on this side of the *Mississippi*. But when their lands are worn out, neither the value of their commodities, nor the circumstances of the planters, will admit of manuring them, at least to any great advantage to this nation.

The staple commodities of *North America* are so gross and bulky, and of so small value, that it generally takes one half of them to pay the freight and other charges in sending them to *Britain*; so that unless our planters have some advantage in making them, such as cheap, rich, and fresh lands, they never can make any; their returns to *Britain* are then neglected, and the trade is gained by others who have these advantages, such as those who may be possessed of the *Mississippi*, or by the *Germans*, *Russians*, *Turks*, &c. who have plenty of lands, and labour cheap: By which means they make more of our staple of *North America*, *Tobacco*, than we do ourselves; while we cannot make their staple of *Hemp*, *Flax*, *Iron*, *Pot-ash*, &c. By that means our people are obliged to interfere with their mother country, for want of the use of those lands of which there is such plenty in *North America*, to produce these commodities that are so much wanted from thence.

The consequences of this may be much more prejudicial to this nation, than is commonly apprehended. This trade of *North America*, whatever may be the income from it, consists in those gross and bulky commodities that are the chief and principal sources of navigation; which

which maintain whole countries to make them, whole fleets to transport them, and numbers of people to manufacture them at home; on which accounts this trade is more profitable to a nation, than the mines of *Mexico* or *Peru*. If we compare this with other branches of trade, as the sugar trade, or even the fishery, it will appear to be by far the most profitable to the nation, whatever those others may be to a few individuals. We set a great value on the fishery, in which we do not employ a third part of the seamen that we do in the plantation trade of *North America*; and the same may be said of the sugar trade. The tobacco trade alone employs more seamen in *Britain*, than either the fishery, or sugar trade\*; and brings in more money to the nation than all the products of *America* perhaps put together.

But

\* By the best accounts we have, there were 4,000 seamen employed in the tobacco trade, in the year 1733, when the inspection on tobacco passed into a law; and we may perhaps reckon them now 4,500, altho' some reckon them less.

By the same accounts, taken by the custom-house officers, it appeared, that the number of *British* ships employed in all *America*, including the fishery, were 1,400, with 17,000 seamen;

But those gross commodities that afford these sources of navigation, however valuable they may be to the public, and to this nation in particular, are far from being so to individuals: They are cheap, and of small value, either to make, or to trade in them; and for that reason they are neglected by private people, who never think of making them, unless the public takes care to give them all due encouragement, and to set them about those employments; for which purpose good and proper lands, such as those on the *Mississipi*, are absolutely necessary, without which nothing can be done.

seamen; besides 9,000 or 10,000 seamen belonging to *North America*, who are all ready to enter into the service of *Britain* on any emergency or encouragement.

Of these there were but 4,000 seamen employed in the fishery from *Britain*; and about as many, or 3,600, in the sugar trade.

The *French* on the other hand employ upwards of 20,000 seamen in the fishery, and many more than we do in the sugar trade.

In short, the plantation trade of *North America* is to *Britain*, what the fishery is to *France*, the great nursery of seamen; which may be much improved. It is for this reason that we have always thought this nation ought, for its safety, to enjoy an exclusive right to the one or the other of these at least.

The



The many advantages of such lands that produce a staple for *Britain*, in *North America*, are not to be told. The whole interest of the nation in those colonies depends upon them, if not the colonies themselves. Such lands alone enable the colonies to take their manufactures and other necessaries from *Britain*, to the mutual advantage of both. And how necessary that may be will appear from the state of those colonies in *North America*, which do not make, one with another, as much as is sufficient to supply them only with the necessary article of cloathing; not to mention the many other things they want and take from *Britain*; and even how they pay for that is more than any man can tell. In short, it would appear that our colonies in *North America* cannot subsist much longer, if at all, in a state of dependance for all their manufactures and other necessaries, unless they are provided with other lands that may enable them to purchase them; and where they will find any such lands, but upon the *Mississipi*, is more than we can tell. When their lands are worn out, are poor and barren, or in an improper climate or situation, so that they will produce nothing to send to *Britain*, such lands can only be converted into corn and pasture grounds; and the people in our colonies

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are thereby necessarily obliged, for a bare subsistence, to interfere with *Britain*, not only in manufactures, but in the very produce of their lands.

By this we may perceive the absurdity of the popular outcry, that we have already *land enough*, and more than we can make use of in *North America*. They who may be of that opinion should shew us, where the land is to be found, and what it will produce, that may turn to any account to the nation. Those people derive their opinion from what they see in *Europe*, where the quantity of land that we possess in *North America* will, no doubt, maintain a greater number of people than we have there. But they should consider, that those people in *Europe* are not maintained by the planting of a bare raw commodity, with such immense charges upon it, but by farming, manufactures, trade, and commerce; which they will soon reduce our colonies to, who would confine them to their present settlements, between the sea-coast and the mountains that surround them.

Some of our colonies perhaps may imagine; they cannot subsist without these employments; which

which indeed would appear to be the case in their present state: But that seems to be as contrary to their true interest, as it is to their condition of *British* colonies. They have neither skill, materials, nor any other conveniences, to make manufactures; whereas their lands require only culture to produce a staple commodity, providing they are possessed of such as are fit for that purpose. Manufactures are the produce of labour, which is both scarce and dear among them; whereas lands are, or may and should be made, both cheap and in plenty; by which they may always reap much greater profits from the one than the other. That is, moreover, a certain pledge for the allegiance and dependance of the colonies; and at the same time makes their dependance to become their *interest*. It has been found by frequent experience, that the making of a staple commodity for *Britain* is more profitable, than manufactures, providing they have good lands to work.

It were to be wished indeed, that we could support our interest in *America*, and those sources of navigation, by countries that were more convenient to it, than those on the *Mississippi*. But that, we fear, is not to be done,

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however

however it may be desired. We wish we could say as much of the lands in *Florida*, and on the bay of *Mexico*, as of those on the *Mississipi*; but they are not to be compared to these, by all accounts, however convenient they may be in other respects to navigation. In all these southern and maritime parts of that continent the lands are in general but very poor and barren, being little more than *pine barrens*, or *sandy deserts*. The climate is at the same time so intemperate, that white people are in a great measure unfit for labour in it, as much as they are in the islands; this obliges them to make use of slaves, which are now become so dear, that it is to be doubted, whether all the produce of those lands will enable the proprietors of them to purchase slaves, or any other labourers; without which they can turn to little or no account to the nation, and those countries can support but very few people, if it were only to protect and defend them.

The most convenient part of those countries seems to be about *Mobile*, and *Pensacola*; which are, as it were, an entrepot between our present settlements and the *Mississipi*, and safe station for our ships. But it is a pity, that the lands about them are the most barren, and the  
climate

climate the most intemperate, by all accounts, of any perhaps in all *America* \*. And our author tells us, the lands are not much better even on the river of *Mobile*; which is but a very inconsiderable one. But the great inconvenience of those countries proceeds from the number of *Indians* in them; which will make it very difficult to settle any profitable plantations among them, especially in the inland parts that are more fertile; whereas the *Mississipi* is free from *Indians* for 1000 miles. It was but in the year 1715, that those *Indians* overran all the colony of *Carolina*, even to *Charles-Town*; by which the *French* got possession of that country, and of the *Mississipi*; both which they had just before, in *June* 1713, dispossessed us of.

If we turn our eyes again to the lands in our northern colonies, it is to be feared, we can expect much less from them. There is an inconvenience attending them, with regard to any improvements on them for *Britain*, which is not to be remedied. The climate is so severe, and the winters so long, that the people are obliged to spend that time in providing the necessaries of life, which should be employed, in profit-

\* See page 84, 250, &c. *Charlevoix Hist. N. France*, tom. II. 484, *Laval, infra*, &c.

able colonies, on the making of some staple commodity, and returns to *Britain*. They are obliged to feed their creatures for five or six months in the year, which employs their time in summer, and takes up the best of their lands, such as they are, which should produce their staple commodities, to provide for themselves and their flocks against winter. For that reason the people in all our northern colonies are necessarily obliged to become farmers, to make corn and provisions, instead of *planters*, who make a staple commodity for *Britain*; and thereby interfere with their mother country in the most material and essential of all employments to a nation, agriculture.

In short, neither the soil, nor climate, will admit of any improvements for *Britain*, in any of those northern colonies. If they would produce any thing of that kind, it must be *hemp*; which never could be made in them to any advantage, as appears from many trials of it in *New England*\*. The great dependance of those northern colonies is upon the supplies of lumber and provisions, which they send to the islands. But as they increase and multiply,

\* See, *Douglas's Hist. N. America*, *Ellis's Improvements of New England*, &c.

their



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their woods are cut down, lumber becomes scarce and dear, and the number of people enhances the value of land, and of every thing it produces, especially provisions.

If this is the case of those northern colonies on the sea-coast, what can we expect from the inland parts; in which the soil is not only more barren, and the climate more severe, but they are, with all these disadvantages, so inconvenient to navigation, both on account of their distance, and of the many falls and currents in the river *St. Lawrence*, that it is to be feared, those inland parts of our northern colonies will never produce any thing for *Britain*, more than a few furs; which they will do much better in the hands of the natives, than in ours.

These our northern colonies, however, are very populous, and increase and multiply very fast. There are above a million of people in them, who can make but very little upon their lands for themselves, and still less for their mother country. For these reasons it is presumed, it would be an advantage to them, as well as to the whole nation, to remove their spare people, who want lands, to those vacant lands in the southern parts of the continent, which turn to  
so

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so much greater account than any they are possessed of. There they may have the necessaries of life in the greatest plenty; their stocks maintain themselves the whole year round, with little or no cost or labour; "by which means  
 " many people have a thousand head of cattle,  
 " and for one man to have two hundred, is  
 " very common, with other stock in proportion \*." This enables them to bestow their whole labour, both in summer and winter, on the making of some staple commodity for *Britain*, getting lumber and provisions for the islands, &c. which both enriches them, and the whole nation. That is much better, surely, than to perish in winter for want of cloathing, which they must do unless they make it; and to excite those grudges and jealousies, which must ever subsist between them and their mother country in their present state, and grow so much the worse, the longer they continue in it.

The many advantages that would ensue, from the peopling of those southern parts of the continent from our northern colonies, are hardly to be told. We might thereby people and secure those countries, and reap the pro-

fits of them, without any loss of people; which are not to be spared for that purpose in *Britain*, or any other of her dominions. This is the great use and advantage that may be made of the expulsion of the *French* from those northern parts of *America*. They have hitherto obliged us to strengthen those northern colonies, and have confined the people in them to towns, and townships, in which their labour could turn to no great account, either to themselves or to the nation; by which we have, in a great measure, lost the labour of one half of the people in our colonies. But as they are now free from any danger on their borders, they may extend their settlements with safety, disperse themselves on plantations, and cultivate those lands; that may turn to some account, both to them, and to the whole nation. In short they may now make some staple commodity for *Britain*; on which the interest of the colonies, and of the nation in them, chiefly depends; and which we can never expect from those colonies in their present situation.

What those commodities are, that we might get from those southern parts of *North America*, will appear from the following accounts; which we have not room here to consider more particularly,

ticularly. We need only mention *Hemp*, *Flax*, and *Silk*, those great articles and necessary materials of manufactures; for which alone this nation pays at least a million and an half a-year, if not two millions, and could never get them from all the colonies we have. *Cotton*, and *Indigo*, are equally useful. Not to mention *Copper*, *Iron*, *Potash*, &c. which, with *Hemp*, *Flax*, and *Silk*, make the great balance of trade against the nation, and drain it of its treasure; when we might have those commodities from our colonies for manufactures, and both supply ourselves and others with them. *Wine*, *Oil*, *Raisins*, and *Currants*, &c. those products of *France* and *Spain*, on which *Britain* expends so much of her treasure, to enrich her enemies, might likewise be had from those her own dominions. *Britain* might thereby cut off those resources of her enemies; secure her colonies for the future; and prevent such calamities of war, by cultivating those more laudable arts of peace: Which will be the more necessary, as these are the only advantages the nation can expect, for the many millions that have been expended on *America*.

As the  
 we have not too much to consider in the  
 of the

*A Description of the Harbour of*  
**PENSACOLA.**

**A**S the harbour of **PENSACOLA** will appear to be a considerable acquisition to *Britain*, it may be some satisfaction to give the following account of it, from *F. Laval*, royal professor of mathematics, and master of the marine-academy at *Toulon*; who was sent to *Louisiana*, on purpose to make observations in 1719; and had the accounts of the officers who took *Pensacola* at that time, and surveyed the place.

“ The colonies of *Pensacola*, and of *Dauphin Island*, are at present on the decline; the inhabitants having removed to settle at *Mobile* and *Biloxi*, or at *New Orleans*, where the lands are much better; for at the first the soil is chiefly sand, mixed with little earth. The land, however, is covered with woods of pines, firs, and oaks; which make good trees, as well as at *Ship-Island*. The road of *Pensacola* is the only good port thereabouts for large ships, and *Ship-Island* for small ones, where vessels,

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vessels, that draw from thirteen to fourteen feet water, may ride in safety, under the island, in fifteen feet, and a good holding ground; as well as in the other ports, which are all only open roads, exposed to the south, and from west to east.

“ *Pensacola* is in north-latitude  $30^{\circ} 25'$ ; and is the only road in the bay of *Mexico*, in which ships can be safe from all winds. It is landlocked on every side; and will hold a great number of ships, which have very good anchorage in it, in a good holding ground of soft sand, and from twenty-five to thirty-four feet of water. You will find not less than twenty-one feet of water on the barr, which is at the entrance into the road, providing you keep in the deepest part of the channel. Before a ship enters the harbour, she should bring the fort of *Pensacola* to bear between north and north  $\frac{1}{2}$  east, and keep that course till she is west, or west  $\frac{1}{2}$  south, from the fort on the island of *St. Rose*, that is, till that fort bears east, and east  $\frac{1}{2}$  north. Then she must bear away a little to the land on the west side, keeping about midway between that and the island, to avoid a bank on this last, which runs out to some distance



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distance west-north-west from the point of the island.

“ If there are any breakers on the ledge of rocks, which lie to the westward of the barr, as often happens; if there is any wind, that may serve for a mark to ships, which steer along that ledge, at the distance of a good musket-shot, as they enter upon the barr; then keep the course above-mentioned. Sometimes the currents set very strong out of the road, which you should take care of, lest they should carry you upon these rocks.

“ As there is but half a foot rising (*levée*) on the barr of *Pensacola*, every ship of war, if it be not in a storm, may depend upon nineteen (perhaps twenty) feet of water, to go into the harbour, as there are twenty-one feet on the barr. Ships that draw twenty feet must be towed in. By this we see, that ships of sixty guns may go into this harbour: and even seventy gun ships, the largest requisite in that country in time of war, if they were built flat-bottomed, like the *Dutch* ships, might pass every where in that harbour.

“ In

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" In 1719 *Pensacola* was taken by Mr. *Champlain*, in the *Hercules* man of war, of sixty-four guns; but carried only fifty-six; in company with the *Mars*, pierced for sixty guns, but had in only fifty-four; and the *Triton*, pierced for fifty-four guns, but carried only fifty; with two frigates of thirty-six and twenty guns.

" This road is subject to one inconvenience; several rivers fall into it, which occasion strong currents, and make boats or canoes, as they pass backwards and forwards, apt to run a-

" The admiral was on board of the *Hercules*, which drew twenty-one feet of water, and there were but twenty-two feet into the harbour in the highest tides; so that they despaired of carrying in this ship. But an old Canadian, named *Crim-roy*, a man of experience, who was perfectly acquainted with that coast, boasted of being able to do it, and succeeded; for which he was the next year honoured with letters of noblesse. *Dumont* (an officer there at the time) II. 22.

But *Bellin*, from the charts of the admiralty, makes but twenty feet of water on the barr of *Pensacola*. The difference may arise from the tides; which are very irregular and uncertain, on all that coast, according to the winds; never rising above three feet, sometimes much less. In twenty-four hours the tide ebbs in the harbour for eighteen or nineteen hours, and flows five or six. *Lafit.*

ground;

## HARBOUR OF PENSACOLA. xlvii

ground; but as the bottom is all sand, they are not apt to founder. On the other hand there is a great advantage in this road; it is free from worms, which never breed in fresh water, so that vessels are never worm-eaten in it."

But *F. Charlevoix* seems to contradict this last circumstance: "The bay of *Pensacola* would be a pretty good port, says he, if the worms did not eat the vessels in it, and if there was a little more water in the entrance into it; for the *Hercules*, commanded by Mr. *Champmolin*, touched upon it." It is not so certain then, that this harbour is altogether free from worms; altho' it may not be so subject to them, as other places in those climes, from the many small fresh water rivers that fall into this bay, which may have been the occasion of these accounts, that are seemingly contradictory.

In such a place ships might at least be preserved from worms, in all likelihood, by paying their bottoms with *aloes*, or mixing it with their other stuff. That has been found to prevent the biting of these worms; and might be had in plenty on the spot. Many kinds of

*aloes*

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~~also~~ would grow on the barren sandy lands about *Pensacola*, and in *Florida*, which is the proper soil for them; and would be a good improvement for those lands, which will hardly bear any thing else to advantage, whatever use is made of it.

Having room in this place, we may fill it up with an answer to a common objection against *Louisiana*; which is, that this country is never likely to turn to any account, because the *French* have made so little of it.

But that objection, however common, will appear to proceed only from the ignorance of those who make it. No country can produce any thing without labourers; which, it is certain, the *French* have never had in *Louisiana*, in any numbers at least, sufficient to make it turn to any greater account than it has hitherto done. The reason of this appears not to be owing to the country, but to their proceedings and misconduct in it. Out of the many thousand people who were contracted for by the grantees, to be sent to *Louisiana* in 1719, there were but eight hundred sent, we see; and of these the greatest part were ruined by their idle schemes,

## HARBOUR OF PENSACOLA. xlii

schemes, which made them and others abandon the country entirely. The few again who remained in it were cut off by an *Indian* massacre in 1729, which broke up the only promising settlements they had in the country, those of the *Natches*, and *Yafous*, which were never afterwards reinstated. Instead of encouraging the colony in such misfortunes, the minister, Cardinal *Fleuri*, either from a spirit of oeconomy, or because it might be contrary to some other of his views, withdrew his protection from it, gave up the public plantations, and must thereby, no doubt, have very much discouraged others. By these means they have had few or no people in *Louisiana*, but such as were condemned to be sent to it for their crimes, women of ill fame, deserted soldiers, insolvent debtors, and galley-slaves, *Forçats*, as they call them; “ Who, looking on the country only  
 “ as a place of exile, were disheartened at every  
 “ thing in it; and had no regard for the pro-  
 “ gress of a colony, of which they were only  
 “ members by compulsion, and neither knew  
 “ nor considered its advantages to the state.  
 “ It is from such people that many have  
 “ taken their accounts of this country; and  
 “ throw,

## I DESCRIPTION, &c.

“ throw the blame of all misarranges in it  
“ upon the country, when they are only owing  
“ to the incapacity and negligence of those  
“ who were intrusted to settle it \*.”

\* *Chénier's Hist. N. France*, tom. III. p. 447.

THE



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THE  
**HISTORY**  
OF  
**LOUISIANA.**

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**BOOK I.**

*The Transactions of the FRENCH  
in LOUISIANA.*

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**CHAP. I.**

*Of the first Discovery and Settlement of  
LOUISIANA.*

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**A**FTER the Spaniards came to have  
Settlements on the *Great Antilles*,  
it was not long before they attempt-  
ed to make Discoveries on the coasts of the  
*Gulf of Mexico*. In 1520, *Lucas Vasquez de*  
*Allon* landed on the Continent to the North  
of that Gulf, being favourably received by

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B

the

the people of the country, who made him presents in gold, pearls, and plated silver. This favourable reception made him return thither four years after; but the natives having changed their friendly sentiments towards him, killed two hundred of his men, and obliged him to retire.

In 1528 *Pamphilo Nefunez* \* landed also on that coast, receiving from the first nations, he met in his way, presents made in gold; which, by signs, they gave him to understand, came from the *Apalachean* mountains, in the country, which at this day goes under the name of *Florida*: And thither he attempted to go, undertaking a hazardous journey of twenty five days. In this march he was so often attacked by the new people he continually discovered, and lost so many of his men, as only to think of re-embarking with the few that were left, happy to have himself escaped the dangers, which his imprudence had exposed him to.

The relation published by the Historian of *Dominico* † *Soto*, who in 1539 landed in the Bay of *St. Esprit*, is so romantic, and so constantly contradicted by all who have travelled that country, that far from giving credit to it,

\* *Narvaez.* † *Ferdinando.*

we ought rather to suppose his enterprize had no success; as no traces of it have remained, any more than of those that went before. The inutility of these attempts proved no manner of discouragement to the *Spaniards*: After the discovery of *Florida*, it was with a jealous eye they saw the *French* settle there in 1564, under *René de Laudonniere*, sent thither by the Admiral *Coligni*, where he built Fort *Carolin*; the ruins of which are still to be seen above the Fort of *Pensacola* \*. There the *Spaniards* some time after attacked them, and forcing them to capitulate, cruelly murdered them, without any regard had to the treaty concluded between them. As *France* was at that time involved in the calamities of a religious war, this act of barbarity had remained unresented, had not a single man of *Mont Marsan*, named *Dominique de Gourges*, attempted, in the name of the nation, to take vengeance thereof. In 1567 having fitted out a vessel, and sailed for *Florida*, he took three Forts built by the *Spaniards*; and after killing many of them in the several attacks he made, hanged the rest: And having settled there a

\* This intended settlement of Admiral *Coligni* was on the east coast of *Florida*, about *St. Augustin*, instead of *Pensacola*. *De Laet* is of opinion, that their Fort *Carolin* was the same with *St. Augustin*.

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new post \*, returned to *France*. But the disorders of the State having prevented the maintaining that post; the *Spaniards* soon after retook possession of the country, where they remain to this day.

From that time the *French* seemed to have dropped all thoughts of that coast, or of attempting any discoveries therein; when the wars in *Canada* with the natives, afforded them the knowledge of the vast country they are possessed of at this day. In one of these wars a *Recollet*, or *Franciscan* Friar, named F. *Hennepin*, was taken and carried to the *Illinois*. As he had some skill in surgery, he proved serviceable to that people, and was also kindly treated by them: And being at full liberty, he travelled over the country, following for a considerable time the banks of the river *St. Louis*, or *Mississipi*, without being able to proceed to its mouth. However, he failed not to take possession of that country, in the name of *Louis XIV*, calling it *Louisiana*. Providence having facilitated his return to *Canada*, he gave the most advantageous account of all he had seen; and after his return to *France*,

\* He abandoned the country without making any settlement; nor have the *French* ever had any settlement in it from that day to this. See *Laudonniere*, *Hakluyt*, &c.



drew up a relation thereof, dedicated to M. *Colbert*.

The account he gave of *Louisiana* failed not to produce its good effects. M. *de la Salle*, equally famous for his misfortunes and his courage, undertook to traverse these unknown countries quite to the sea. In Jan. 1679 he set out from *Quebec* with a large detachment, and being come among the *Illinois*, there built the first fort France ever had in that country, calling it *Crevecoeur*; and there he left a good garrison under the command of the Chevalier *de Tonti*. From thence he went down the river *St. Louis*, quite to its mouth; which, as has been said, is in the Gulf of *Mexico*: And having made observations, and taken the elevation in the best manner he could, returned by the same way to *Quebec*, from whence he passed over to *France*.

After giving the particulars of his journey to M. *Colbert*, that great Minister, who knew of what importance it was to the State, to make sure of so fine and extensive a country, scrupled not to allow him a ship and a small frigate, in order to find out, by the way of the Gulf of *Mexico*, the mouth of the river *St. Louis*. He set sail in 1685: But his observations, doubtless, not having had all the

justness requisite, after arriving in the Gulf, he got beyond the river, and running too far westward, entered the Bay of *St. Bernard*: And some misunderstanding happening between him and the officers of the vessels, he debarqued with the men under his command, and having settled a post in that place, undertook to go by land in quest of the great river. But after a march of several days, some of his people, irritated on account of the fatigue he exposed them to, availing themselves of an opportunity, when separated from the rest of his men, basely assassinated him. The soldiers, tho' deprived of their Commander, still continued on their route, and, after crossing many rivers, arrived at length at the *Arkansas*, where they unexpectedly found a *French* post lately settled. The *Chevalier de Tonti* was gone down from the fort of the *Illinois*, quite to the mouth of the river, about the time he judged *M. de la Salle* might have arrived by sea: And not finding him, was gone up again, in order to return to his post. And in his way entering the river of the *Arkansas*, quite to the village of that nation, with whom he made an alliance, some of his people insisted, they might be allowed to settle there; which was agreed to, he leaving ten of them in that place: And this small cantonment

tonment maintained its ground, not only because from time to time encreased by some *Canadians*, who came down this river; but above all because those who formed it, had the prudent precaution to live in peace with the natives, and treat, as legitimate, the children they had by the daughters of the *Arkansas*, with whom they matched out of necessity.

The report of the pleasantness of *Louisiana* spreading through *Canada*, many *Frenchmen* of that country repaired to settle there, dispersing themselves at pleasure along the river *St. Louis*, especially towards its mouth, and even in some islands on the coast, and on the river *Mobile*, which lies nearer *Canada*. The facility of the commerce with *St. Domingo* was, undoubtedly, what invited them to the neighbourhood of the sea, though the interior parts of the country be in all respects far preferable. However, these scattered settlements, incapable to maintain their ground of themselves, and too distant to be able to afford mutual assistance, neither warranted the possession of this country, nor could they be called a taking of possession. *Louisiana* remained in this neglected state, till M. d'*Hiberville*, *Chef d'Escadre*, having discovered, in 1698,

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the mouths of the river *St. Louis*, and being nominated Governor General of that vast country, carried thither the first colony in 1699. As he was a native of *Canada*, the colony almost entirely consisted of *Canadians*, among whom *M. de Luchereau*, uncle of *Madam d'Iberville*, particularly distinguished himself.

The settlement was made on the river *Mobile*, with all the facility that could be wished ; but its progress proved slow : For these first inhabitants had no other advantage above the natives, as to the necessaries of life, but what their own industry, joined to some rude tools, to give the plainest form to timbers, afforded them.

The war, which *Louis XIV.* had at that time to maintain, and the pressing necessities of the state, continually engrossed the attention of the Ministry, nor allowed them time to think of *Louisiana*. What was then thought most adviseable, was to make a grant of it to some rich person ; who, finding it his interest to improve that country, would at the same time that he promoted his own interest, promote that of the state. *Louisiana* was thus ceded to *M. Crozat*. And it is to be presumed, had *M. d'Iberville* lived longer, the colony

## OF LOUISIANA. 9

colony would have made considerable progress : But that illustrious sea-officer, whose authority was considerable, dying at the *Havannah*, in 1701 ; after which this settlement was deserted : A long time must intervene before a new Governor could arrive from *France*. The person pitched upon to fill that post, was *M. de la Motte Cadillac*, who arrived in that country in *June 1713*.

The colony had but a scanty measure of commodities, and money scarcer yet : It was rather in a state of languor, than of vigorous activity, in one of the finest countries in the world ; because impossible for it to do the laborious works, and make the first advances, always requisite in the best lands.

The *Spaniards*, for a long time, considered *Louisiana* as a property justly theirs, because it constitutes the greatest part of *Florida*, which they first discovered. The pains the *French* were at then to settle there, roused their jealousy, to form the design of cramping us, by settling at the *Assinais*, a nation not very distant from the *Natchitoches*, whither some *Frenchmen* had penetrated. There the *Spaniards* met with no small difficulty to form that settlement, and being at a loss how to accomplish it, one *F. Ydalgo*, a *Franciscan*

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Friar, took it in his head to write to the *French*, to beg their assistance in settling a mission among the *Affinai's*. He sent three different copies of his letter hap-hazard three different ways to our settlements, hoping one of them at least might fall into the hands of the *French*.

Nor was he disappointed in his hope, one of them, from one post to another, and from hand to hand, falling into the hands of M. *de la Motte*. That General, incessantly taken up with the concerns of the colony, and the means of relieving it, was not apprized of the design of the *Spaniards* in that letter; could only see therein a sure and short method to remedy the present evils, by favouring the *Spaniards*, and making a treaty of commerce with them, which might procure to the colony what it was in want of, and what the *Spaniards* abounded with, namely, horses, cattle, and money: He therefore communicated that letter to M. *de St. Denis*, to whom he proposed to undertake a journey by land to *Mexico*.

M. *de St. Denis*, for the fourteen years he was in *Louisiana*, had made several excursions up and down the country; and having a general



## OF LOUISIANA. IT

neral knowledge of all the languages of the different nations which inhabit it, gained the love and esteem of these people, so far as to be acknowledged their Grand Chief. This Gentleman, in other respects a man of courage, prudence, and resolution, was then the fittest person *M. de la Motte* could have pitched upon, to put his design in execution.

How fatiguing soever the enterprize was, *M. de St. Denis* undertook it with pleasure, and set out with twenty-five men. This small company would have made some figure, had it continued entire; but some of them dropped *M. de St. Denis* by the way, and many of them remained among the *Natchitoches*, to whose country he was come. He was therefore obliged to set out from that place, accompanied only by ten men, with whom he traversed upwards of an hundred and fifty leagues in a country entirely depopulated, having on his route met with no nation, till he came to the *Presidio*, or fortress of *St. John Baptist*, on the *Rio (river) del Norte*, in *New Mexico*.

The Governor of this fort was *Don Diego Raimond*, an officer advanced in years, who favourably received *M. de St. Denis*, on acquaintance.

quainting him, that the motive to his journey was F. Ydalgo's letter, and that he had orders to repair to *Mexico*. But as the *Spaniards* do not readily allow strangers to travel through the countries of their dominion in *America*, for fear the view of these fine countries should inspire notions, the consequences of which might be greatly prejudicial to them, D. Diego did not chuse to permit M. de St. Denis to continue his route, without the previous consent of the Viceroy. It was therefore necessary to dispatch a courier to *Mexico*, and to wait his return.

The courier, impatiently longed for, arrived at length, with the permission granted by the Duke of *Linarez*, Viceroy of *Mexico*. Upon which M. de St. Denis set out directly, and arrived at *Mexico*, June 5, 1715. The Viceroy had naturally an affection to *France*; M. de St. Denis was therefore favourably received, saving some precautions, which the Duke thought proper to take, not to give any disgust to some officers of justice who were about him.

The affair was soon dispatched; the Duke of *Linarez* having promised to make a treaty of commerce, as soon as the *Spaniards* should be

be settled at the *Affinaïs*; which M. de St. Denis undertook to do, upon his return to Louisiana.

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## C H A P. II.

*The return of M. de St. Denis: His settling the Spaniards at the Affinaïs. His second journey to Mexico, and return from thence.*

M. De St. Denis soon returned to the fort of St. John Baptist; after which he resolved to form the *Caravan*, which was to be settled at the *Affinaïs*; at whose head M. de St. Denis put himself, and happily conducted it to the place appointed. And then having, in quality of Grand Chief, assembled the nation of the *Affinaïs*, he exhorted them to receive and use the *Spaniards* well. The veneration, which that people had for him, made them submit to his will in all things; and thus the promise he had made to the Duke of Lixarez was faithfully fulfilled.

The *Affinaïs* are fifty leagues distant from the *Natchitoches*. The *Spaniards*, finding themselves

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themselves still at too great a distance from us, availed themselves of that first settlement, in order to form a second among the *Adaiés*; a nation which is ten leagues from our post of the *Naëchitoches*: whereby they confine us on the west within the neighbourhood of the river *St. Louis*: And from that time it was not their fault, that they had not cramped us to the North: As I shall mention in its place.

To this anecdote of their history I shall, in a word or two, add that of their settlement at *Pensacola*, on the coast of *Florida*, three months after M. *d'Hiberville* had carried the first inhabitants to *Louisiana*, that country having continued to be inhabited by *Europeans*, ever since the garrison left there by *Dominique de Gourgès*; which either perished or deserted, for want of being supported\*.

To return to M. *de la Motte* and M. *St. Denis*: The former, ever attentive to the project of having a treaty of commerce concluded with the *Spaniards*, and pleased with the success of M. *de St. Denis's* journey to *Mexico*, proposed his return thither again,

\* They returned to France. See p. 4.

not doubting but the Duke of *Linarez* would be as good as his word, as the *French* had already been. *M. de St. Denis*, ever ready to obey, accepted the commission of his General. But this second journey was not to be undertaken as the first ; it was proper to carry some goods, in order to execute that treaty, as soon as it should be concluded, and to indemnify himself for the expences he was to be at. Though the store-houses of *M. Crozat* were full, it was no easy matter to get goods. The factors refused to give any on credit ; nay, refused *M. de la Motte's* security ; and there was no money to be had to pay them. The Governor was therefore obliged to form a company of the most responsible men of the colony : And to this company only the factors determined to advance the goods. This expedient was far from being agreeable to *M. de St. Denis*, who opened his mind to *M. de la Motte* on that head, and told him, that some or all of his partners would accompany the goods they had engaged to be security for : and that, altho' it was absolutely necessary the effects should appear to be his property alone, they would not fail to discover, they themselves were the proprietors ; which would be sufficient to cause their confiscation ;

tion; the commerce between the two nations not being open. *M. de la Motte* saw the solidity of these reasons; but the impossibility of acting otherwise, constrained him to supersede them; And, as *M. de St. Denis* had foreseen, it accordingly happened.

He set out from *Mobile*, August 13, 1716, escorted, as he all along apprehended, by some of those concerned; and being come to the *Affinaiis*, he there passed the winter. On the 19th of *March*, the year following, setting out on his journey, he soon arrived at the *Presidio* of *St. John Baptist*. *M. de St. Denis* declared these goods to be his own property, in order to obviate their confiscation, which was otherwise unavoidable; and wanted to shew some acts of bounty and generosity, in order to gain the friendship of the *Spaniards*. But the untractableness, the avarice, and indiscretion of the parties concerned, broke through all his measures; and to prevent the entire disconcerting of them, he hastened his departure for *Mexico*, where he arrived May 14, 1717. The Duke of *Linares* was yet there, but sick, and on his death-bed. *M. de St. Denis* had, however, time to see him, who knew him again: And that Nobleman took care to have him recommended



mended to the Viceroy his successor ; namely, the Marquis of *Balero*, a man as much against the *French*, as the Duke was for them .

M. *de St. Denis* did not long solicit the Marquis of *Balero* for concluding the treaty of commerce ; he soon had other business to mind. F. *Olivarez*, who, on the representation of F. *Ydalgo*, as a person of a jealous, turbulent, and dangerous disposition, had been excluded from the mission to the *Affinais*, being then at the court of the Viceroy, saw with an evil eye the person, who had settled F. *Ydalgo* in that mission, and resolved to be avenged on him for the vexation caused by that disappointment. He joined himself to an officer, named Don *Martin de Alaron*, a person peculiarly protected by the Marquis of *Balero* : And they succeeded so well with that Nobleman, that in the time M. *de St. Denis* least expected, he found himself arrested, and clapt in a dungeon ; from which he was not discharged till *December 20* of this year, by an order of the Sovereign Council of *Mexico*, to which he found means to present several petitions. The Viceroy, constrained to enlarge him, allotted the town for his place of confinement.

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The business of the treaty of commerce being now at an end, *M. de St. Denis's* attention was only engaged how to make the most of the goods, of which *Don Diego Raymond* had sent as large a quantity as he could, to the town of *Mexico*; where they were seized by *D. Martin de Alaron*, as contraband; he being one of the emissaries of his protector, appointed to persecute such strangers, as did not dearly purchase the permission to sell their goods. *M. de St. Denis* could make only enough of his pillaged and damaged effects just to defray certain expences of suit, which in a country, that abounds with nothing else but gold and silver, are enormous.

Our prisoner having nothing further to engross his attention in *Mexico*, but the safety of his person, seriously bethought himself how to secure it; as he had ever just grounds to apprehend some bad treatment at the hands of his three avowed enemies. Having therefore planned the means of his flight, on *September 25, 1718*, as the night came on, he quitted *Mexico*, and placing himself in ambush at a certain distance from the town, waited till his good fortune should afford the means of travelling otherwise than on foot. About nine

at

at night, a horseman, well-mounted, cast up. To rush of a sudden upon him, dismount him, mount his horse, turn the bridle, and set up a gallop, was the work of a moment only for *St. Denis*. He rode on at a good pace till day, then quitted the common road, to repose him : A precaution he observed all along, till he came near to the *Presidio* of *St. John Baptist*. From thence he continued his journey on foot ; and at length, on *April* 2, 1719, arrived at the *French* colony, where he found considerable alterations.

From the departure of *M. de St. Denis* from *Mexico*, to his return again, almost three years had elapsed. In that long time, the grant of *Louisiana* was transferred from *M. Crozat* to the *West India* Company ; *M. de la Motte Cadillac* was dead, and *M. de Biainville*, brother to *M. d'Hiberville*, succeeded as Governor General. The capital place of the colony was no longer at *Mobile*, nor even at *Old Biloxi*, whither it had been removed : *New Orleans*, now begun to be built, was become the capital of the country, whither he repaired to give *M. de Biainville* an account of his journey ; after which he retired to his settlement. The King afterwards conferred upon him

him the Cross of *St. Louis*, in acknowledgment and recompence of his services.

The West *India* Company, building great hopes of commerce on *Louisiana*, made efforts to people that country, sufficient to accomplish their end. Thither, for the first time, they sent, in 1718, a colony of eight hundred men : Some of which settled at *New Orleans*, others formed the settlements of the *Natchez*. It was with this embarkation I passed over to *Louisiana*.

## CHAP. III.

*Embarkation of eight hundred men by the West India company to Louisiana. Arrival and stay at Cape François. Arrival at Isle Dauphine. Description of that island.*

THE embarkation was made at *Rochelle* on three different vessels, on one of which I embarked. For the first days of our voyage we had the wind contrary, but no high sea. On the eighth the wind turned more favourable. I observed nothing interesting till we came to the Tropick of *Cancer*, where the ceremony of baptizing was performed on those, who had never been a voyage: After passing the Tropick, the Commodore steered too much to the South, which our Captain observed. In effect, after several days sailing, we were obliged to bear off to the North: We afterwards discovered the isle of *St. Juan de Porto Rico*, which belongs to the *Spaniards*. Losing sight of that, we discovered the island of *St. Domingo*; and a little after, as we bore on, we saw the *Grange*, which is a rock, overtopping the steep coast, which is almost perpendicular to the edge of the

the water. This rock, seen at a distance, seems to have the figure of a grange, or barn. A few hours after we arrived at *Cape François*, distant from that rock only twelve leagues.

We were two months in this passage to *Cape François*; both on account of the contrary winds, we had on setting out, and of the calms, which are frequent in those seas: Our vessel, besides, being clumsy and heavy, had some difficulty to keep up with the others; which, not to leave us behind, carried only their four greater sails, while we had out between seventeen and eighteen.

It is in those seas we meet with the *Trade-winds*; which tho' weak, a great deal of way might be made, did they blow constantly, because their course is from East to West without varying: Storms are never observed in these seas, but the calms often prove a great hindrance; and then it is necessary to wait some days, till a *grain*, or squall, brings back the wind: A *grain* is a small spot seen in the air, which spreads very fast, and forms a cloud, that gives a wind, which is brisk at first, but not lasting, tho' enough to make way with. Nothing besides remarkable is here



here seen, but the chase of the *Flying-fish* by the *Bonitas*.

The *Bonita* is a fish, which is sometimes two feet long; extremely fond of the *Flying-fish*: Which is the reason, it always keeps to the places, where these fish are found: Its flesh is extremely delicate and of a good flavour.

The *Flying-fish* is of the length of a herring, but rounder. From its sides, instead of fins, issue out two wings, each about four inches in length, by two in breadth at the extremity; they fold together and open out like a fan, and are round at the end; consisting of a very fine membrane, pierced with a vast many little holes, which keep the water, when the fish is out of it: In order to avoid the pursuit of the *Bonita*, it darts into the air, spreads out its wings, goes strait on, without being able to turn to the right or left; which is the reason, that, as soon as the toilets, or little sheets of water, which fill up the small holes of its wings, are dried up, it falls down again; and the same *Bonita*, which pursued it in the water, still following it with his eye in the air, catches it when fallen into the water; it sometimes falls on board ships. The *Bonita*, in his turn, becomes the prey of the seamen,  
by

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by means of little puppets, in the form of *flying fish*, which it swallows, and by that means is taken.

We staid fifteen days at *Cape François*, to take in wood and water, and to refresh. It is situate on the North part of the island of *St. Domingo*, which part the *French* are in possession of, as the *Spaniards* are of the other. The fruits and sweet-meats of the country are excellent, but the meat good for nothing, hard, dry, and tough. This country being scorched, grass is very scarce, and the animals therein languish and droop. Six weeks before our arrival, fifteen hundred persons died of an epidemic distemper, called the *Siam* distemper.

We sailed from *Cape François* with the same wind, and the finest weather imaginable. We then passed between the islands of *Tortuga* and *St. Domingo*, where we espied *Port de Paix*, which is over-against *Tortuga*: We afterwards found ourselves between the extremities of *St. Domingo* and *Cuba*, which belongs to the *Spaniards*: We then steered along the south coast of this last, leaving to the left *Jamaica*, and the great and little *Kayemans*, which are subject to the *English*. We at length quitted *Cuba* at *Cape Anthony*, steering for *Louisiana* a North west course.

We

## OF LOUISIANA. 25

We espied land in coming towards it, but so flat, though distant but a league from us, that we had great difficulty to distinguish it, tho' we had then but four fathom water. We put out the boat to examine the land, which we found to be *Candlemas Island* (*la Chandeleur*.) We directly set sail for the Island of *Massacre*, since called *Isle Dauphine*, situated three leagues to the south of that continent, which forms the Gulf of *Mexico* to the North, at about  $27^{\circ} 35'$  North Latitude, and  $288^{\circ}$  of Longitude. A little after we discovered the *Isle Dauphine*, and cast anchor before the harbour, in the road, because the harbour itself was choaked up. To make this passage we took three months, and arrived only *August 25th*. We had a prosperous voyage all along, and the more so, as no one died, or was even dangerously ill the whole time, for which we caused *Te Deum* solemnly to be sung.

We were then put on shore with all our effects. The Company had undertaken to transport us, with our servants and effects, at their expence, and to lodge, maintain, and convey us to our several Concessions, or Grants.

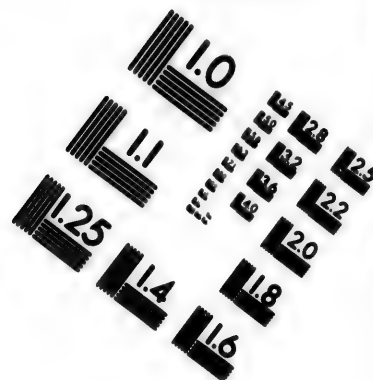
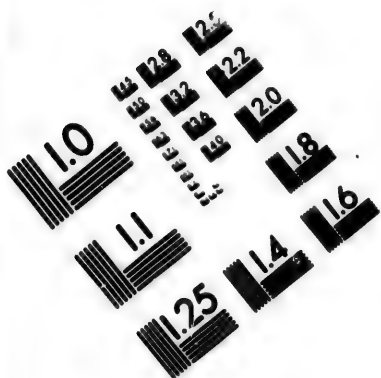
## 26 THE HISTORY

This Gulf abounds with delicious fish ; as the *sarde*, (pilchard,) red fish, cod, sturgeon, ringed thornback, and many other sorts, the best in their kind. The *sarde* is a large fish ; its flesh is delicate, and of a fine flavour, the scales grey, and of a moderate size. The red fish is so called, from its red scales, of the size of a crown piece. The cod, fished for on this coast, is of the middling sort, and very delicate. The thornback is the same as in *France*. Before we quit this Island, it will not, perhaps, be improper to mention some things about it.

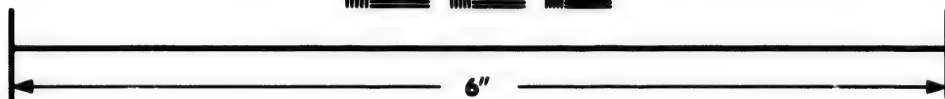
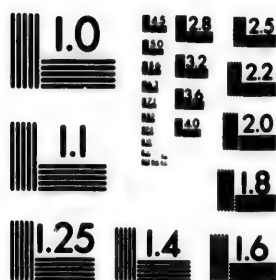
The Isle *Massacre* was so called by the first *Frenchmen*, who landed there, because on the shore of this island they found a small rising ground, or eminence, which appeared the more extraordinary in an island altogether flat ; and seemingly formed only by the sand, thrown in by some high gusts of wind. As the whole coast of the Gulf is very flat, and along the continent lies a chain of such islands, which seem to be mutually joined by their points, and to form a line parallel with the continent, this small eminence appeared to them extraordinary ; it was more narrowly examined ; and in different parts thereof they found dead  
mens

mens bones, just appearing above the little earth, that covered them. Then their curiosity led them to rake off the earth in several places; but finding nothing underneath, but a heap of bones, they cried out with horror, *Ab! what a Massacre.* They afterwards understood by the natives, who are at no great distance off, that a nation adjoining to that island, being at war with another much more powerful, was constrained to quit the continent, which is only three leagues off, and to remove to this island, there to live in peace the rest of their days; but that their enemies, justly confiding in their superiority, pursued them to this their feeble retreat, and entirely destroyed them; and after raising this inhuman trophy of their victorious barbarity, retired again. I myself saw this fatal monument, which made me imagine, this unhappy nation must have been even numerous toward its period, as only the bones of their warriors and aged men must have lain there, their custom being to make slaves of their young people. Such is the origin of the first name of this island, which, on our arrival, was changed to that of *Ile Dauphine*: an act of prudence, it should seem, to discontinue an appellation,





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## 28 THE HISTORY

so odious, of a place, that was the cradle of the colony ; as *Mobile* was its birth-place.

This island is very flat, and all a white sand, as are all the others, and the coast in like manner. Its length is about seven leagues from East to West ; its breadth a short league from South to North, especially to the East, where the settlement was made, on account of the harbour which was at the South end of the island, and choaked up by a high sea, a little before our arrival : This east end runs to a point. It is tolerably well stored with pine ; but so dry and parched, on account of its crystal sand, as that no greens or pulse can grow therein, and beasts are pinched and hard put to it for sustenance.

In the mean time, *M. de Biainville*, Commandant General for the Company in this Colony, was gone to mark out the spot, on which the Capital was to be built, namely, one of the banks of the river *Mississippi*, where at present stands the city of *New Orleans*, so called in honour of the Duke of *Orleans*, then Regent.

## C H A P. IV.

*The Author's departure for his Grant.*

*Description of the places he passed through, as far as New Orleans.*

THE time of my departure, so much wished for, came at length. I set out with my hired servants, all my effects, and a letter for M. Paillou, Major General at *New Orleans*, who commanded there in the absence of M. Biainville. We coasted along the Continent, and came to lie in the mouth of the river of the *Pasca-Ogoulas*; so called, because near its mouth, and to the east of a bay of the same name, dwells a nation, called *Pasca-Ogoulas*, which denotes the *Nation of Bread*. Here it may be remarked, that in the Province of *Louisiana*, the appellation of several people terminates in the word *Ogoula*, which signifies *nation*; and that most of the rivers derive their names from the nations which dwell on their banks. We then passed in view of *Biloxi*, where formerly was a petty nation of that name; then in view of the bay of *St. Louis*, leaving to the left successively *Isle Dauphine*, *Isle a Corne*, (*Horn-Island*), *Isle*

*aux Vaisseaux, (Ship-Island,) and Isle aux Chats, (Cat-Island.)*

I have already described *Isle Dauphine*, let us now proceed to the three following. *Horn-Island* is very flat, and tolerably wooded, about six leagues in length, narrowed to a point to the west side. I know not, whether it was for this reason, or on account of the number of horned cattle upon it, that it received this name; but it is certain, that the first *Canadians*, who settled on *Isle Dauphine*, had put most of their cattle, in great numbers there; whereby they came to grow rich even when they slept. These cattle not requiring any attendance, or other care, in this island, came to multiply in such a manner, that the owners made great profits of them on our arrival in the Colony.

Proceeding still westward, we meet *Ship-Island*, so called, because there is a small harbour, in which vessels at different times have put in for shelter. But as the island is distant four leagues from the coast, and that this coast is so flat, that boats cannot approach nearer than half a league, this harbour comes to be entirely useless. The island may be about five leagues in length, and a large league in breadth at the West point. Near that point to the North is the harbour, facing the continent;

continent ; towards the East end it may be half a league in breadth : It is sufficiently wooded, and inhabited only by rats, which swarm there.

At two leagues distance, going still westward, we meet *Cat-Island* ; so called, because at the time it was discovered, great numbers of cats were found upon it. This island is very small, not above half a league in diameter. The forests are over-run with underwood : a circumstance which, doubtless, determined *M. de Biainville* to put in some hogs to breed ; which multiplied to such numbers, that, in 1722, going to hunt them, no other creatures were to be seen ; and it was judged, that in time they must have devoured each other. It was found they had destroyed the cats.

All these islands are very flat, and have the same bottom of white sand ; the woods, especially of the three first, consist of pine ; they are almost all at the same distance from the continent, the coast of which is equally sandy.

After passing the bay of *St. Louis*, of which I have spoken, we enter the two Channels which lead to *Lake Pontchartrain*, called at present the *Lake St. Louis* ; of these Channels,

one is named the Great, the other the Little ; and they are about two leagues in length, and formed by a chain of islets, or little isles, between the Continent and *Cockle Island*. The great Channel is to the South.

We lay at the end of the Channels in *Cockle Island*, so called, because almost entirely formed of the shells, named *Coquilles des Palourdes*, in the sea-ports, without a mixture of any others. This isle lies before the mouth of the Lake *St. Louis* to the East, and leaves at its two extremities two outlets to the Lake ; the one, by which we entered, which is the Channel just mentioned ; the other, by the Lake *Borgne*. The Lake, moreover, at the other end westward, communicates, by a Channel, with the Lake *Maurepas* ; and may be about ten leagues in length from East to West, and seven in breadth. Several rivers, in their course southward, fall into it. To the south of the Lake is a great creek (*Bayouc*, a stream of dead water, with little or no observable current) called *Bayouc St. Jean* ; it comes close to *New Orleans*, and falls into this Lake at *Grass Point* (*Pointe aux Herbes*) which projects a great way into the Lake, at two leagues distance from *Cockle Island*. We passed near that Point, which is  
nothing

nothing but a quagmire. From thence we proceeded to the *Bayou Choupic*, so denominated from a fish of that name, and three leagues from the *Pointe aux Herbes*. The many rivulets, which discharge themselves into this Lake, make its waters almost fresh, though it communicates with the sea: and on this account it abounds not only with sea fish but with fresh water fish, some of which, particularly carp, would appear to be of a monstrous size in *France*.

We entered this Creek *Choupic*: at the entrance of which is a fort at present. We went up this Creek for the space of a league, and landed at a place where formerly stood the village of the natives, who are called *Cola-Pissas*, an appellation corrupted by the *French*, the true name of that nation being *Aquelou-Pissas*, that is, *the Nation of men that hear and see*. From this place to *New Orleans*, and the river *Mississippi*, on which that Capital is built, the distance is only a league.



## C H A P. V.

*The Author put in possession of his territory.*

*His resolution to go and settle among the Natchez.*

**B**EING arrived at the Creek *Choupic*, the *Sieur Lavigne*, a *Canadian*, lodged me in a cabin of the *Aquelou-Piffas*, whose village he had bought. He gave others to my workmen for their lodging; and we were all happy to find, upon our arrival, that we were under shelter, in a place that was uninhabited. A few days after my arrival I bought an *Indian* female slave of one of the inhabitants, in order to have a person, who could dress our victuals, as I perceived the inhabitants did all they could to entice away our labourers, and to gain them by fair promises. As for my slave and me, we did not understand one another's language; but I made myself to be understood by signs, which these natives comprehend very easily: She was of the nation of the *Chitimachas*, with whom the *French* had been at war for some years.

I went to view a spot on *St. John's Creek*, about half a league distant from the place,  
where

where the Capital was to be founded, which was yet only marked out by a hut, covered with palmetto-leaves, and which the Commandant had caused to be built for his own lodging; and after him for M. *Paillou*, whom he left Commandant of that post. I had chosen that place preferably to any others, with a view to dispose more easily of my goods and provisions, and that I might not have them to transport to a great distance. I told M. *Paillou* of my choice, who came and put me in possession, in the name of the *West-India Company*.

I built a hut upon my settlement, about forty yards from the Creek of *St. John*, till I could build my house, and lodging for my people. As my hut was composed of very combustible materials, I caused a fire to be made at a distance, about half way from the Creek, to avoid accidents; which occasioned an adventure, that put me in mind of the prejudices they have in *Europe*, from the relations that are commonly current. The account I am going to give of it, may have upon those, who think as I did then, the same effect that it had upon me.

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It was almost night, when my slave perceived, within two yards of the fire, a young alligator, five feet long, which beheld the fire without moving. I was in the garden hard by, when she made me repeated signs to come to her ; I ran with speed, and upon my arrival she shewed me the crocodile, without speaking to me ; the little time, that I examined it, I could see, its eyes were so fix'd on the fire, that all our motions could not take them off. I ran to my cabin to look for my gun, as I am a pretty good marksman : but what was my surprize, when I came out, and saw the girl with a great stick in her hand attacking the monster ! Seeing me arrive, she began to smile, and said many things, which I did not comprehend. But she made me understand, by signs, that there was no occasion for a gun to kill such a beast ; for the stick she shewed me was sufficient for the purpose.

The next day the former master of my slave came to ask me for some salad-plants ; for I was the only one who had any garden-stuff, having taken care to preserve the seeds I had brought over with me. As he understood the language of the natives, I begged him to ask the girl, why she had killed the alligator so rashly. He began to laugh, and told

told me, that all new comers were afraid of those creatures, altho' they have no reason to be so; and that I ought not to be surprized at what the girl had done, because her Nation inhabited the borders of a lake, which was full of those creatures; that the children, when they saw the young ones come on land, pursued them, and killed them, by the assistance of the people of the cabin, who made good cheer of them.

I was pleased with my habitation, and I had good reasons, which I have already related, to make me prefer it to others; notwithstanding I had room to believe, that the situation was none of the healthiest, the country about it being very damp. But this cause of an unwholsome air does not exist at present, since they have cleared the ground, and made a bank before the town. The quality of that land is very good, for what I had sown came up very well. Having found in the spring some peach-stones which began to sprout, I planted them; and the following Autumn they had made shoots four feet high, with branches in proportion.

Notwithstanding these advantages, I took a resolution to quit this settlement, in order  
to

to make another one, about a hundred leagues higher up ; and I shall give the reasons, which, in my opinion, will appear sufficient to have made me take that step.

My surgeon came to take his leave of me, letting me know, he could be of no service to me, near such a town as was forming ; where there was a much abler surgeon than himself ; and that they had talked to him so favourably of the Post of the *Natchez*, that he was very desirous to go there, and the more so, as that place, being unprovided with a surgeon, might be more to his advantage. To satisfy me of the truth of what he told me, he went immediately and brought one of the old inhabitants, of whom I had bought my slave, who confirmed the account he had given me of the fineness of the country of the *Natchez*. The account of the old man, joined to many other advantages, to be found there, had made him think of abandoning the place where we were, to settle there ; and he reckoned to be abundantly repaid for it in a little time.

My slave heard the discourse that I have related, and as she began to understand *French*, and I the language of the country, she addressed herself to me thus : “ Thou art going, then, to that country ; the sky is much  
“ finer

“finer there ; game is in much greater plenty ; and as I have relations, who retired there in the war, which we had with the *French*, they will bring us every thing we want : They tell me that country is very fine, that they live well in it, and to a good old age.”

Two days afterwards I told M. *Hubert* what I had heard of the Country of the *Natchez*. He made answer, that he was so persuaded of the goodness of that part of the country, that he was making ready to go there himself, to take up his Grant, and to establish a large settlement for the Company : And, continued he, “ I shall be very glad, if you will do the same : We shall be company to one another, and you will unquestionably do your business better there than here.”

This determined me to follow his advice : I quitted my settlement, and took lodgings in the town, till I should find an opportunity to depart, and receive some Negroes whom I expected in a short time. \* My stay at *New Orleans* appeared long, before I heard of the arrival of the Negroes. Some days after the news of their arrival, M. *Hubert* brought me two good ones, which had fallen to me by

\* Chap. VIII.

lot. One was a young Negro about twenty, with his wife of the same age ; which cost me both together 1320 livres, or 55l. sterling.

Two days after that I set off with them alone in a pettyaugre (a large canoe,) because I was told we should make much better speed in such a vessel, than in the boats that went with us ; and that I had only to take powder and ball with me, to provide my whole company with game sufficient to maintain us ; for which purpose it was necessary to make use of a paddle, instead of oars, which make too much noise for the game. I had a barrel of powder, with fifteen pounds of shot, which I thought would be sufficient for the voyage : But I found by experience, that this was not sufficient for the vast plenty of game that is to be met with upon that river, without ever going out of your way. I had not gone above twenty-eight leagues, to the Grant of *M. Paris du Vernai*, when I was obliged to borrow of him fifteen pounds of shot more. Upon this I took care of my ammunition, and shot nothing but what was fit for our provision ; such as wild ducks, summer ducks, teal, and saw-bills. Among the rest I killed a carancro, wild geese, cranes, and flamingo's ; I likewise often killed young  
alli-



alligators ; the tail of which was a feast for the slaves, as well as for the *French* and *Canadian* rowers.

Among other things I cannot omit to give an account of a monstrous large alligator I killed with a musquet ball, as it lay upon the bank, about ten feet above the edge of the water. We measured it, and found it to be nineteen feet long ; its head three feet and a half long, above two feet nine inches broad, and the other parts in proportion : At the belly it was two feet two inches thick ; and it infected the whole air with the odor of musk. M. *Mebane* told me, he had killed one twenty-two feet long.

After several days navigation, we arrived at *Tenicas* on *Christmas* eve ; where we heard Mass from M. *d'Avion*, of the foreign Missions, with whom we passed the rest of the holy-days, on account of the good reception and kind invitation he gave us. I asked him, if his great zeal for the salvation of the natives was attended with any success ; he answered me, that notwithstanding the profound respect the people shewed him, it was with the greatest difficulty he could get leave to baptize a few children at the point of death ;

death; that those of an advanced age excused themselves from embracing our holy religion, because they are too old, say they, to accustom themselves to rules, that are so difficult to be observed; that the Chief, who had killed the Physician, that attended his only son in a distemper, of which he died, had taken a resolution to fast every *Friday* while he lived, in remorse for his inhumanity with which he had been so sharply reproached by him. This Grand Chief attended both morning and evening prayers; the women and children likewise assisted regularly at them; but the men, who did not come very often, took more pleasure in ringing the bell. In other respects, they did not suffer this zealous pastor to want for any thing, but furnished him with whatever he desired.

We were yet twenty-five leagues to the end of our journey to the *Natchez*, and we left the *Tonicas*, where we saw nothing interesting, if it were not several steep hills, which stand together; among which there is one that they name the White Hill, because they find in it several veins of an earth, that is white, greasy, and very fine, with which I have seen very good potters ware made. On the same hill there are veins of ochre,

ochre, of which the *Natchez* had just taken some to stain their earthen ware, which looked well enough ; when it was besmeared with ochre, it became red on burning.

At last we arrived at the *Natchez*, after a voyage of twenty-four leagues ; and we put on shore at a landing-place, which is at the foot of a hill two hundred feet high, upon the top of which Fort *Rosalie* \* is built, surrounded only with pallisadoes. About the middle of the hill stands the magazine, nigh to some houses of the inhabitants, who are settled there, because the ascent is not so steep in that place ; and it is for the same reason that the magazine is built there. When you are upon the

\* Fort *Rosalie*, in the country of the *Natchez*, was at first pitched upon for the metropolis of this colony. But though it be necessary to begin by a settlement near the sea ; yet if ever *Louisiana* comes to be in a flourishing condition, as it may very well be, it appears to me, that the capital of it cannot be better situated than in this place. It is not subject to inundations of the river ; the air is pure ; the country very extensive ; the land fit for every thing, and well watered ; it is not at too great a distance from the sea, and nothing hinders vessels to go up to it. In fine, it is within reach of every place intended to be settled. *Charlevoix, Hist. de la N. France, III. 415.*

This is on the East side of the *Mississippi*, and appears to be the first post on that river which we ought to secure.

top

top of this hill, you discover the whole country, which is an extensive beautiful plain, with several little hills interspersed here and there, upon which the inhabitants have built and made their settlements. The prospect of it is charming.

On our arrival at the *Natchez* I was very well received by M. *Loire de Flaucourt*, Store-keeper of this Post, who regaled us with the game that abounds in this place; and after two days I hired a house near the Fort, for M. *Hubert* and his family, on their arrival, till he could build upon his own plantation. He likewise desired me to choose two convenient parcels of land, whereon to settle two considerable plantations, one for the Company, and the other for himself. I went to them in two or three days after my arrival, with an old inhabitant for my guide, and to shew me the proper places, and at the same time to choose a spot of ground for myself; this last I pitched upon the first day, because it is more easy to choose for one's self than for others.

I found upon the main road that leads from the chief village of the *Natchez* to the Fort, about an hundred paces from this last, a cabin of the Natives upon the road side, surrounded with

with a spot of cleared ground, the whole of which I bought by means of an interpreter. I made this purchase with the more pleasure, as I had upon the spot, wherewithal to lodge me and my people, with all my effects : The cleared ground was about six acres, which would form a garden and a plantation for tobacco, which was then the only commodity cultivated by the inhabitants. I had water convenient for my house, and all my land was very good. On one side stood a rising ground with a gentle declivity, covered with a thick field of canes, which always grow upon the rich lands ; behind that was a great meadow, and on the other side was a forest of white walnuts (*Hiccories*) of nigh fifty acres, covered with grass knee deep. All this piece of ground was in general good, and contained about four hundred acres of a measure greater than that of *Paris* : The soil is black and light.

The other two pieces of land, which M. *Hubert* had ordered me to look for, I took up on the border of the little river of the *Natchez*, each of them half a league from the great village of that nation, and a league from the fort ; and my plantation stood between these two and the fort, bounding the two others. After this I took up my lodging upon my own plantation, in the hut I had bought  
of

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of the *Indian*, and put my people in another, which they built for themselves at the side of mine; so that I was lodged pretty much like our wood-cutters in *France*, when they are at work in the woods.

As soon as I was put in possession of my habitation, I went with an interpreter to see the other fields, which the *Indians* had cleared upon my land, and bought them all, except one, which an *Indian* would never sell to me: It was situated very convenient for me, I had a mind for it, and would have given him a good price; but I could never make him agree to my proposals. He gave me to understand, that, without selling it, he would give it up to me, as soon as I should clear my ground to his; and that while he stayed on his own ground near me, I should always find him ready to serve me, and that he would go a-hunting and fishing for me. This answer satisfied me, because I must have had twenty Negroes, before I could have been able to have reached him; they assured me likewise, that he was an honest man; and far from having any occasion to complain of him as a neighbour, his stay there was extremely serviceable to me.

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I had not been settled at the *Natchez* six months, when I found a pain in my thigh, which, however, did not hinder me to go about my business. I consulted our Surgeon about it, who caused me to be bled; on which the humour fell upon the other thigh, and fixed there with such violence, that I could not walk without extreme pain. I consulted the Physicians and Surgeons of *New Orleans*, who advised me to use aromatic baths; and if they proved of no service, I must go to *France*, to drink the waters, and to bathe in them. This answer satisfied me so much the less, as I was neither certain of my cure by that means, nor would my present situation allow me to go to *France*. This cruel distemper, I believe, proceeded from the rains, with which I was wet, during our whole voyage; and might be some effects of the fatigues I had undergone in war, during several campaigns I had made in *Germany*.

As I could not go out of my hut, several neighbours were so good as to come and see me, and every day we were no less than twelve at table from the time of our arrival, which was on the fifth of *January*, 1720. Among the rest was *F. de Ville*, who waited there, in his journey to the *Illinois*, till the ice, which began



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began to come down from the North, was gone. His conversation afforded me great satisfaction in my confinement, and allayed the vexation I was under from my two Negroes being run away. In the mean time my distemper did not abate, which made me resolve to apply to one of the *Indian* Conjurers, who are both Surgeons, Divines, and Sorcerers; and who told me he would cure me by sucking the place, where I felt my pain. He made several scarifications upon the part with a sharp flint, each of them about as large as the prick of a lancet, and in such a form, that he could suck them all at once, which gave me extreme pain for the space of half an hour. The next day I found myself a little better, and walked about into my field, where they advised me to put myself in the hands of some of the *Natchez*, who, they said, did surprizing cures, of which they told me many instances, confirmed by creditable people. In such a situation a man will do any thing for a cure, especially as the remedy, which they told me of, was very simple: it was only a poultice, which they put upon the part affected, and in eight days time I was able to walk to the fort, finding myself perfectly cured, as I have felt no return of my pain since that time. This was, without doubt, a great satisfaction to a  
 young

young man, who found himself otherwise in good health, but had been confined to the house for four months and a half, without being able to go out a moment ; and gave me as much joy as I could well have, after the loss of a good Negroe, who died of a defluxion on the breast, which he caught by running away into the woods, where his youth and want of experience made him believe he might live without the toils of slavery ; but being found by the *Tonicas*, constant friends of the *French*, who live about twenty leagues from the *Natchez*, they carried him to their village, where he and his wife were given to a *Frenchman*, for whom they worked, and by that means got their livelihood ; till *M. de Montplaisir* sent them home to me.

This *M. de Montplaisir*, one of the most agreeable Gentlemen in the Colony, was sent by the Company, from *Clerac* in *Gascony*, to manage their plantation at the *Natchez*, to make tobacco upon it, and to shew the people the way of cultivating and curing it ; the Company having learned, that this place produced excellent tobacco, and that the people of *Clerac* were perfectly well acquainted with the culture and way of managing it.

## C H A P. VI.

*The Voyage of the Author to Biloxi. Description of that place. Settlement of Grants. The Author discovers two Copper-mines. His return to the Natchez.*

**T**HE second year after my settling among the *Natchez*, I went to *New Orleans*, as I was desirous to sell my goods and commodities myself, instead of selling them to the travelling pedlars, who often require too great a profit for their pains. Another reason that made me undertake this voyage, was to send my letters to *France* myself; which I was certainly informed, were generally intercepted.

Before my departure, I went to the Commandant of the Fort, and asked him whether he had any letters for the Government. I was not on very good terms of friendship with this Commandant of the *Natchez*, who endeavoured to pay his court to the Governor, at the expence of others. I knew he had letters for M. *Biauville*, altho' he told me he had none, which made me get a certificate from the Commissary General of this refusal to my demand; and at the same time the Commissary begged  
me

me to carry down a servant of the Company, and gave me an order to pay for his maintenance. As I made no great haste, but stopt to see my friends, in my going down the river, the Commandant had time to send his letters, and to write to the Governor, that I refused to take them. As soon as I arrived at *Biloxi*, this occasioned M. *Blainville* to tell me, with some coldness, that I refused to charge myself with his letters. Upon this I shewed him the certificate of the Commissary General; to which he could give no other answer, than by telling me, that, at least, I could not deny, that I had brought away by stealth a servant of the Company. Upon this I shewed him the other certificate of the Commissary General, by which he desired the Directors to reimburse me the charges of bringing down this servant, who was of no use to him above; which put the Governor in a very bad humour.

Upon my arrival at *New Orleans* I was informed, that there were several Grantees arrived at *New Biloxi*. I thought fit then to go thither, both to sell my goods, and to get a sure conveyance for my letters to *France*. Here I was invited to sup with M. *d'Artaquette*, King's Lieutenant, who usually invi-

ted all the Grantees, as well as myself. I there found several of the Grantees, who were all my friends; and among us we made out a sure conveyance for our letters to *France*, of which we afterwards made use.

*Biloxi* is situate opposite to *Ship-Island*, and four leagues from it. But I never could guess the reason, why the principal settlement was made at this place, nor why the Capital should be built at it; as nothing could be more repugnant to good sense; vessels not being able to come within four leagues of it; but what was worse, nothing could be brought from them, but by changing the boats three different times, from a smaller size to another still smaller; after which they had to go upwards of an hundred paces with small carts through the water to unload the least boats. But what ought still to have been a greater discouragement against making a settlement at *Biloxi*, was, that the land is the most barren of any to be found thereabouts; being nothing but a fine sand, as white and shining as snow, on which no kind of greens can be raised; besides, the being extremely incommoded with rats, which swarm there in the sand, and at that time ate even the very stocks of the guns, the famine being there so very great, that more than

than five hundred people died of hunger; bread being very dear, and flesh-meat still more rare. There was nothing in plenty but fish, with which this place abounds.

This scarcity proceeded from the arrival of several Grantees all at once; so as to have neither provisions, nor boats to transport them to the places of their destination, as the Company had obliged themselves to do. The great plenty of oysters, found upon the coast, saved the lives of some of them, although obliged to wade almost up to their thighs for them, a gun-shot from the shore. If this food nourished several of them, it threw numbers into sickness; which was still more heightened by the long time they were obliged to be in the water.

The Grants were those of M. *Law*, who was to have fifteen hundred men, consisting of *Germans*, *Provençals*, &c. to form the settlement. His land being marked out at the *Arkansas*, consisted of four leagues square, and was erected into a Duchy, with accoutrements for a company of dragoons, and merchandize for more than a million of livres. M. *Levens*, who was trustee of it, had his chaise to visit the different posts of the Grant. But M. *Law* soon after becoming bankrupt,

the Company seized on all the effects and merchandise; and but a few of those who engaged in the service of that Grant, remained at the *Arkansas*; they were afterwards all dispersed and set at liberty. The *Germans* almost to a man settled eight leagues above, and to the West of the Capital. This Grant ruined near a thousand persons at *L'Orient* before their embarkation, and above two hundred at *Biloxi*; not to mention those, who came out at the same time with me in 1718. All this distress, of which I was a witness at *Biloxi*, determined me to make an excursion a few leagues on the coast, in order to pass some days with a friend, who received me with pleasure. We mounted horse to visit the interior part of the country a few leagues from the sea. I found the fields pleasant enough, but less fertile than along the *Mississipi*; as they have some resemblance of the neighbouring coast, which has scarce any other plants but pines, that run a great way, and some red and white cedars.

When we came to the plain, I carefully searched every spot that I thought worth my attention. In consequence of the search I found two mines of copper, whose metal plainly appeared above ground. They stood about



bout half a league asunder. We may justly conclude that they are very rich, as they thus disclose themselves on the surface of the earth.

When I had made a sufficient excursion, and judged I could find nothing further to satisfy my curiosity, I returned to *Biloxi*, where I found two boats of the Company, just preparing to depart for *New Orleans*, and a large pettyaugre, which belonged to F. *Charlevoix* the Jesuit, whose name is well known in the Republic of Letters: With him I returned to *New Orleans*.

Some time after my return from *New Orleans* to the *Natchez*, towards the month of *March* 1722, a phenomenon happened, which frightened the whole province. Every morning, for eight days running, a hollow noise, somewhat loud, was heard to reach from the sea to the *Illinois*; which arose from the West. In the afternoon it was heard to descend from the East, and that with an incredible quickness; and tho' the noise seemed to bear on the water, yet without agitating it, or discovering any more wind on the river than before. This frightful noise was only the prelude of a most violent tempest. The hurricane,

the most furious ever felt in the province, lasted three days. As it arose from the South-west and North-east, it reached all the settlements which were along the *Mississipi*; and was felt for some leagues more or less strong, in proportion to the greater or less distance: But in the places, where the force or height of the hurricane passed, it overturned every thing in its way, which was an extent of a large quarter of a league broad; so that one would take it for an avenue made on purpose, the place where it passed being entirely laid flat, whilst every thing stood upright on each side. The largest trees were torn up by the roots, and their branches broken to pieces and laid flat to the earth, as were also the reeds of the woods. In the meadows, the grass itself, which was then but six inches high, and which is very fine, could not escape, but was trampled, faded, and laid quite flat to the earth.

The height of the hurricane passed at a league from my habitation; and yet my house, which was built on piles, would have been overturned, had I not speedily propped it with a timber, with the great end in the earth, and nailed to the house with an iron hook seven or eight inches long. Several  
houses

## OF LOUISIANA: 57

houses of our post were overturned. But it was happy for us in this colony, that the height of the hurricane passed not directly over any Post, but obliquely traversed the *Missisipi*, over a country intirely uninhabited. As this hurricune came from the South, it so swelled the sea, that the *Missisipi* flowed back against its current, so as to rise upwards of fifteen feet high.

D 5 CHAP.

## C H A P. VII.

*First War with the Natchez. Cause of the War.*

I N the same year, towards the end of Summer, we had the first war with the *Natchez*. The *French* had settled at the *Natchez*, without any opposition from these people ; so far from opposing them, they did them a great deal of service, and gave them very material assistance in procuring provisions ; for those, who were sent by the *West India Company* with the first fleet, had been detained at *New Orleans*. Had it not been for the *Natives*, the people must have perished by famine and distress : For, how excellent soever a new country may be, it must be cleared, grubbed up, and sown, and then at least we are to wait the first harvest, or crop. But during all that time people must live, and the Company was well apprized of this, as they had sent, with the eight hundred men, they had transported to *Louisiana*, provisions for three years. The Grantees and Planters, obliged to treat, or truck for provisions with the *Natchez*, in consequence of that saw their funds wasted,  
and

and themselves incapable of forming so considerable a settlement, without this trucking, as necessary, as it was frequent.

However, some benefit resulted from this ; namely, that the *Natchez*, enticed by the facility of trucking for goods, before unknown among them, as fufils, gun-powder, lead, brandy, linen, cloths, and other like things ; by means of an exchange of what they abounded with, came to be more and more attached to the *French* ; and would have continued very useful friends, had not the little satisfaction, which the Commandant of Fort *Rosalie* had given them, for the misbehaviour of one of his soldiers, alienated their minds. This Fort covered the settlement of the *Natchez*, and protected that of *St. Catharine*, which was on the banks of the rivulet of the *Natchez* ; but both the defence and protection it afforded were very inconsiderable ; for this Fort was only pallifadoed, open at six breaches, without a ditch, and with a very weak garrison. On the other hand, the houses of the inhabitants, tho' considerably numerous, were of themselves of no strength ; and then the inhabitants, dispersed in the country, each amidst his field, far from affording mutual assistance, as they would, had they been

in a body, stood each of them, upon any accident, in need of the assistance of others.

A young soldier of Fort *Rosalie* had given some credit to an old warrior of a village of the *Natchez*; which was that of the *White Apple*, each village having its peculiar name: The warrior, in return, was to give him some corn. Towards the beginning of the winter 1723, this soldier, lodging near the Fort, the old warrior came to see him; the soldier insisted on his corn; the native answered calmly, that the corn was not yet dry enough to shake out the grain; that besides, his wife had been ill, and that he would pay him as soon as possible. The young man, little satisfied with this answer, threatened to cudgel the old man: Upon which, this last, who was in the soldier's hut, affronted at this threat, told him, he should turn out, and try who was the best man. On this challenge, the soldier, calling out Murder, brings the guard to his assistance. The guard being come, the young fellow pressed them to fire upon the warrior, who was returning to his village at his usual pace; a soldier was imprudent enough to fire: The old man dropt down. The Commandant was soon apprized of what happened, and came to the spot; where

where the witnesses, both *French* and *Natchez*, informed him of the fact. Both justice and prudence demanded to take an exemplary punishment of the soldier; but he got off with a reprimand. After this the natives made a litter, and carried off their warrior, who died the following night of his wounds, tho' the fusil was only charged with great shot.

Revenge is the predominant passion of the people in *America*: So that we ought not to be surprized, if the death of this old warrior raised his whole village against the *French*. The rest of the nation took no part at first in the quarrel.

The first effect of the resentment of the *Natchez* fell upon a *Frenchman* named M. *Guenot*, whom they surprized returning from the Fort to *St. Catharine*, and upon another inhabitant, whom they killed in his bed. Soon after they attacked, all in a body, the settlement of *St. Catharine*, and the other below Fort *Rosalie*. It was at this last I had fixed my abode: I therefore saw myself exposed, like many others, to pay with my goods, and perhaps my life, for the rashness of a soldier, and the too great indulgence of his Captain. But as I was already acquainted with the character



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acter of the people we had to deal with, I despaired not to save both. I therefore barricado'd myself in my house, and having put myself in a posture of defence, when they came in the night, according to their custom, to surprize me, they durst not attack me.

This first attempt, which I justly imagined was to be followed by another, if not by many such, made me resolve, as soon as day came, to retire under the Fort, as all the inhabitants also did, and thither to carry all the provisions I had at my lodge. I could execute only half of my scheme. My slaves having begun to remove the best things, I was scarce arrived under the Fort, but the Commandant begged I might put myself, at the head of a detachment of the inhabitants, to go to succour *St. Catharine*. He had already sent thither all his garrison, reserving only five men to guard the Fort; but this succour was not sufficient to relieve the settlement, which the natives in great numbers vigorously straitened.

I departed without delay: We heard the firing at a distance, but the noise ceased, as soon as I was come, and the natives appeared to have retired: They had, doubtless, discovered  
 vered

vered me on my march, and the sight of a reinforcement, which I had brought with me, deceived them. The Officer, who commanded the detachment of the garrison, and whom I relieved, returned to the Fort with his men ; and the command being thus devolved on me, I caused all the Negroes to be assembled, and ordered them to cut down all the bushes ; which, covering the country, favoured the approach of the enemy, quite to the doors of the houses of that Grant. This operation was performed without molestation, if you except a few shot, fired by the natives from the woods, where they lay concealed on the other side of the rivulet ; for the plain round *St. Catharine* being entirely cleared, of every thing that could screen them, they durst not shew themselves any more.

However, the Commandant of Fort *Rosalie* sent to treat with the *Stung Serpent* ; in order to prevail with him to appease that part of his nation, and procure a peace. As that great warrior was our friend, he effectually laboured therein, and hostilities ceased. After I had passed twenty-four hours at *St. Catharine*, I was relieved by a new detachment of the inhabitants, whom, in my turn, I relieved next day. It was on this second guard,  
which

which I mounted, that the village we had been at war with, sent me, by their deputies, the *Calumet or Pipe of Peace*. I at first had some thoughts of refusing it, knowing that this honour was due to the Commandant of the Fort ; and it appeared to me a thing so much the more delicate, to deprive him of it, as we were not upon very good terms with each other. However, the evident risk of giving occasion to protract the war, by refusing it, determined me to accept of it ; after having, however, taken the advice of those about me ; who all judged it proper to treat these people gently, to whom the Commandant was become odious.

I asked the Deputies, what they would have ? They answered, faltering, *Peace*. “ Good, said I ; but why bring you the Calumet of Peace to me ? It is to the Chief of the Fort you are to carry it, if you wish to have a Peace.” “ Our orders, said they, are to carry it first to you ; if you choose to receive it, by only smoking therein : After which we will carry it to the Chief of the Fort : But if you refuse receiving it, our orders are to return.”

Upon

## OF LOUISIANA. 65

Upon this I told them, that I agreed to smoke in their pipe, on condition they would go and carry it to the Chief of the Fort. They then made me an harangue ; to which I answered, that it were best to resume our former manner of living together, and that the *French* and the *Red-men* should entirely forget what had passed. To conclude, that they had nothing further to do, but to go and carry the Pipe to the Chief of the Fort, and then go home and sleep in peace.

This was the issue of the first war we had with the *Natchez*, which lasted only three or four days.

The commerce, or truck, was set again on the same footing it had been before ; and those who had suffered any damage, now thought only how they might best repair it. Some time after, the Major General arrived from *New Orleans*, being sent by the Governor of *Louisiana* to ratify the peace ; which he did, and mutual sincerity was restored, and became as perfect, as if there had never been any rupture between us.

It had been much to be wished, that matters had remained on so good a footing. As  
we

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we were placed in one of the best and finest countries of the world ; were in strict connection with the natives, from whom we derived much knowledge of the nature of the productions of the country, and of the animals of all sorts, with which it abounds ; and likewise reaped great advantage in our traffick for furs and provisions ; and were aided by them in many laborious works, we wanted nothing but a profound peace, in order to form solid settlements, capable of making us lay aside all thoughts of *Europe* : But Providence had otherwise ordered.

The Winter, which succeeded this war, was so severe, that a colder was never remembered. The rain fell in icicles in such quantities as to astonish the oldest *Natchez*, to whom this great cold appeared new and uncommon.

Towards the Autumn of this year I saw a phænomenon, which struck the superstitious with great terror : It was, in effect, so extraordinary, that I never remember to have heard of any thing that either resembled, or even came up to it. I had just supped without doors, in order to enjoy the cool of the evening. My face was turned to the West,  
and

and I sat before my table, to examine some planets, which had already appeared. I perceived a glimmering light, which made me raise my eyes; and immediately I saw, at the elevation of about 45 degrees above the horizon, a light proceeding from the South, of the breadth of three inches, which went off to the North, always spreading itself as it moved, and made itself heard by a whizzing, like that of the largest sky-rocket. I judged by the eye, that this light could not be above our atmosphere, and the whizzing noise which I heard, confirmed me in that notion. When it came in like manner to be about 45 degrees to the North above the horizon, it stopped short, and ceased enlarging itself: In that place it appeared to be twenty inches broad; so that in its course, which had been very rapid, it formed the figure of a trumpet-marine, and left in its passage very lively sparks, shining brighter than those which fly from under a smith's hammer; but they were extinguished almost as fast as they were emitted.

At the North elevation I just mentioned, there issued out with a great noise from the middle of the large end, a ball quite round,  
and

and all on fire: This ball was about six inches in diameter; it fell below the horizon to the North, and emitted, about twenty minutes after, a hollow, but very loud noise, for at least the space of a minute, which appeared to come from a great distance. The light began to be weakened to the South, after emitting the ball, and at length disappeared, before the noise of the ball was heard.



## C H A P. VIII.

*The Governor surprized the Natchez with seven hundred men. Astonishing cures performed by the Natives. The Author sends upwards of three hundred simples to the Company.*

**M.** *De Biainville*, at the beginning of the Winter which followed this phænomenon, arrived very privately at our quarter of the *Natchez*, his march having been communicated to none but the Commandant of this Post; who had orders to seize all the *Natchez*, that should come to the Fort that day, to prevent the news of his arrival being carried to their countrymen. He brought with him, in regular troops, inhabitants, and natives, who were our allies, to the number of seven hundred men.

Orders were given, that all our settlers at the *Natchez* should repair before his door at midnight at the latest: I went thither, and mixed with the croud, without making myself known.

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We arrived two hours before day at the settlement of *St. Catharine*. The Commandant having at length found me out, ordered me, in the King's name, to put myself at the head of the settlers among the *Natchez*, and to take the command upon me; and these he ordered to pay the same obedience to me as to himself. We advanced with great silence towards the village of the *Apple*. It may be easily seen, that all this precaution was taken, in order to surprize our enemies, who ought so much the less to expect this act of hostility, as they had fairly made peace with us, and as *M. Paillou* Major General, had come and ratified this peace in behalf of the Governor. We marched to the enemy, and invested the first hut of the *Natchez*, which we found separate; the drums, in concert with the fifes, beat the charge; we fired upon the hut, in which were only three men and two women.

From thence we afterwards moved on to the village, that is, to several huts, that stood together in a row. We halted at three of them, that lay near each other, in which between twelve and fifteen *Natchez* had entrenched themselves. By our manner of proceeding, one would have thought that we  
came

came only to view the huts. Full of indignation, that none exerted himself to fall upon them, I took upon me, with my men, to go round, and take the enemy in rear. They took to their heels, and I pursued; but we had need of the swiftness of deer to be able to come up with them. I came so near, however, that they threw away their cloaths, to run with the greater speed.

I rejoined our people, and expected a reprimand for having forced the enemy, without orders: tho' I had my excuse ready. But here I was mistaken; for I met with nothing but encomiums.

This war, of which I shall give no further detail, lasted only four days. *M. de Biainville* demanded the head of an old mutinous Chief of this village; and the natives, in order to obtain a peace, delivered him up.

I happened to live at some distance from the village of the *Apple*, and very seldom saw any of the people. Such as lived nearer, had more frequent visits from them; but after this war, and the peace, which followed upon it, I never saw one of them. My neighbours, who lived nearer to them, saw but very few of them, even a long time after the conclusion

conclusion of the war. The natives of the other villages came but very seldom among us ; and indeed, if we could have done well without them, I could have wished to have been rid of them for ever. But we had neither a flesh nor a fish-market ; therefore, without them, we must have taken up with what the poultry-yard and kitchen-garden furnished ; which would have been extremely inconvenient.

I one day stopped the *Stung Serpent*, who was passing along without taking notice of any one. He was brother to the *Great Sun*, and Chief of the warriors of the *Natchez*. I accordingly called to him, and said, " We were formerly friends, are we no longer so ? " He answered, *Noco* ; that is, I cannot tell. I replied, " You used to come to my house ; at present you pass by. Have you forgot the way, or is my house disagreeable to you ? As for me, my heart is always the same, both towards you, and all my friends. I am not capable of changing, why then are you changed ? "

He took some time to answer, and seemed to be embarrassed by what I said to him. He never went to the Fort, but when sent for by the Commandant, who put me upon found-  
ing

ing him ; in order to discover, whether his people still retained any grudge.

He at length broke silence ; and told me, “ he was ashamed to have been so long without seeing me ; but I imagined, said he, that you were displeased at our nation ; because among all the *French*, who were in the war, you were the only one that fell upon us.” “ You are in the wrong,” said I, “ to think so. *M. de Biainville*, being our War-chief, we are bound to obey him ; in like manner as you, tho’ a *Sun*, are obliged to kill, or cause to be killed, whomsoever your brother, the *Great Sun*, orders to be put to death. Many other *Frenchmen* besides me, fought an opportunity to attack your countrymen, in obedience to the orders of *M. de Biainville* ; and several other *Frenchmen* fell upon the nearest hut, one of whom was killed by the first shot, which the *Natchez* fired.”

He then said : “ I did not approve, as you know, the war our people made upon the *French*, to avenge the death of their relation, seeing I made them carry the *Pipe of Peace* to the *French*. This you well know, as you first smoked in the pipe yourself. Have the

Vo L. I. E “ *French*

“ *French* two hearts, a good one to-day, and  
“ to-morrow a bad one? As for my brother  
“ and me, we have but one heart and one  
“ word. Tell me, then, if thou art as thou  
“ sayest, my true friend, what thou thinkest  
“ of all this, and shut thy mouth to every  
“ thing else. We know not what to think of  
“ the *French*, who, after having begun the  
“ war, granted a peace and offered it of  
“ themselves; and then at the time we were  
“ quiet, believing ourselves to be at peace,  
“ people come to kill us, without saying a  
“ word.

“ Why, continued he, with an air of dis-  
pleasure, “ did the *French* come into our  
“ country? We did not go to seek them:  
“ They asked for land of us, because their  
“ country was too little for all the men that  
“ were in it. We told them, they might  
“ take land where they pleased, there was  
“ enough for them and for us; that it was  
“ good, the same sun should enlighten us  
“ both, and that we should walk as friends,  
“ in the same path; and that we would give  
“ them of our provisions, assist them to build,  
“ and to labour in their fields. We have  
“ done so; is not this true? What occasion,  
“ then, had we for *Frenchmen*? Before they  
“ came,

"came, did we not live better than we do,  
 "seeing we deprive ourselves of a part of  
 "our corn, our game, and fish, to give a  
 "part to them? In what respect, then, had  
 "we occasion for them? Was it for their  
 "guns? The bows and arrows, which we  
 "used, were sufficient to make us live well.  
 "Was it for their white, blue, and red blan-  
 "kets? We can do well enough with buffalo  
 "skins, which are warmer; our women  
 "wrought feather-blankets for the winter,  
 "and mulberry-mantles for the summer;  
 "which indeed were not so beautiful; but  
 "our women were more laborious and less  
 "vain than they are now. In fine, before  
 "the arrival of the *French* we lived like men  
 "who can be satisfied with what they have;  
 "whereas at this day we are like slaves, who  
 "are not suffered to do as they please."

To this unexpected discourse I know not  
 what answer another would have made; but  
 I frankly own, that if at my first address he  
 seemed to be confused, I really was so in my  
 turn. "My heart," said I to him, better  
 "understands thy reasons than my ears, tho'  
 "they are full of them; and tho' I have a  
 "tongue to answer, my ears have not heard  
 "the reasons of M. de Biainville, to tell



“ them thee : But I know, it was necessary  
“ to have the head he demanded, in order to  
“ a peace. When our Chiefs command us,  
“ we never require the reasons : I can say no-  
“ thing else to thee. But to shew you, that  
“ I am always your real friend, I have here  
“ a beautiful *Pipe of Peace*, which I wanted  
“ to carry to my own country. I know you  
“ have ordered all your warriors to kill some  
“ white eagles, in order to make one, be-  
“ cause you have occasion for it. I give it  
“ you without any other design than to shew  
“ you, that I reckon nothing dear to me,  
“ when I want to do you a pleasure.”

I went to look for it, and I gave it him, telling him, that it was *without design*, that is, according to them, from no interested motive. The natives put as great a value on a *Pipe of Peace*, as on a gun. Mine was adorned with tinsel and silver wire ; so that in their estimation my pipe was worth two guns. He appeared to be extremely well pleased with it, put it up hastily in his case, squeezed my hand with a smile, and called me his true friend.

The Winter was now drawing to a close, and in a little time the natives were to bring us bear-oil to truck. I hoped, that by his  
means

means I should have of the best preferably to any other; which was the only compensation I expected for my pipe. But I was agreeably disappointed. He sent me a deer-skin of bear-oil so very large that a stout man could hardly carry it, and the bearer told me, that he sent it to me, as to his true friend, *without design*. This deer-skin contained thirty-one pots of the measure of the country, or sixty-two pints *Paris* measure.

Three days after, the *Great Sun*, his brother, sent me another deer-skin of the same oil, to the quantity of forty pints. The commonest sort sold this year at twenty sols a pint, and I was sure mine was not of the worst kind.

For some days a *fistula lacrymalis* had come into my left eye, which discharged an humour, when pressed, that portended danger. I shewed it to M. *St. Hilaire*, an able surgeon, who had practised for about twelve years in the *Hôtel Dieu* at *Paris*.

He told me, it was necessary to use the fire for it; and that, notwithstanding this operation, my sight would remain as good as ever; only my eye would be blood-shot: And that

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if I did not speedily set about the operation, the bone of the nose would become carious.

These reasons gave me much uneasiness, as having both to fear and to suffer at the same time : However, after I had resolved to undergo the operation, the *Grand Sun* and his brother came one morning very early, with a man loaded with game, as a present for me.

The *Great Sun* observed I had a swelling in my eye, and asked me what was the matter with it. I shewed it him, and told him, that in order to cure it, I must have fire put to it ; but that I had some difficulty to comply, as I dreaded the consequences of such an operation. Without replying, or in the least apprizing me, he ordered the man, who brought the game, to go in quest of his physician, and tell him, he waited for him at my house. The messenger and physician made such dispatch, that this last came in an hour after. The *Great Sun* ordered him to look at my eye, and endeavour to cure me : After examining it, the physician said, he would undertake to cure me with simples and common water. I consented to this with so much the greater

greater pleasure and readiness, as by this treatment I ran no manner of risque.

That very evening the physician came with his simples, all pounded together, and making but a single ball, which he put with the water in a deep basin, he made me bend my head into it, so as the eye affected stood dipt quite open in the water. I continued to do so for eight or ten days, morning and evening; after which, without any other operation, I was perfectly cured, and never after had any return of the disorder.

It is easy, from this relation, to understand, what dextrous physicians the natives of *Louisiana* are. I have seen them perform surprising cures on *Frenchmen*; on two especially, who had put themselves under the hands of a *French* surgeon settled at this Post. Both patients were about to undergo the grand cure: And after having been under the hands of the surgeon for some time, their heads swelled to such a degree, that one of them made his escape, with as much agility, as a criminal would from the hands of justice, when a favourable opportunity offers. He applied to a *Natchez* physician, who cured him in eight days: His comrade continuing still under the

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*French* surgeon, died under his hands three days after the escape of his companion, whom I saw three years after in a state of perfect health.

In the war which I lately mentioned, the Grand Chief of the *Tonicas*, our allies, was wounded with a ball, which went through his cheek, came out under the jaw, again entered his body at the neck, and pierced through to the shoulder-blade, lodging at last between the flesh and skin : The wound had its direction in this manner, because when he received it, he happened to be in a stooping posture, as were all his men, in order to fire. The *French* surgeon, under whose care he was, and who dressed him with great precaution, was an able man, and spared no pains in order to effect a cure. But the physicians of this Chief, who visited him every day, asked the *Frenchman* what time the cure would take ? he answered, six weeks at least : They returned no answer, but went directly and made a litter, spoke to their Chief, and put him on it, carried him off, treated him in their own manner, and in eight days effected a complete cure.

These

These are facts well known in the Colony. The physicians of the country have performed many other cures, which, if they were to be all related, would require a whole volume apart; but I have confined myself to the three above mentioned, in order to shew, that disorders, frequently accounted almost incurable, are, without any painful operation, and in a short time, cured by physicians, natives of *Louisiana*.

The *West India* Company being informed, that this Province produces a great many simples, whose virtues, known by the natives, afforded so easy a cure to all sorts of distempers, ordered M. *de la Chaise*, who was sent from *France* in quality of Director General of this Colony, to cause enquiry to be made into the simples, proper for Physick and for Dying, by means of some *Frenchmen*, who might perhaps be masters of the secrets of the Natives. I was pointed out for this purpose to M. *de la Chaise*, who was but just arrived, and who wrote to me, desiring my assistance in this enquiry; which I gave him with pleasure, and in which I exerted myself to the utmost, because I well knew, the Company continually aimed at what might be for the benefit of the Colony.

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After I thought I had done, in that respect, what might give satisfaction to the Company, I transplanted in earth, put into cane-baskets, above three hundred simples, with their numbers, and a memorial, which gave a detail of their virtues, and taught the manner of using them. I afterwards understood, that they were planted in a Botanic Garden, made for the purpose, by order of the Company.

CHAP.



## C H A P. IX.

*French Settlements, or Posts. The Post at Mobile. The Mouths of the Mississippi. The situation and description of New Orleans.*

**T**HE Settlement at *Mobile* was the first seat of the Colony in this Province. It was the residence of the Commandant General, the Commissary General, the Staff-Officers, &c. As vessels could not enter the river *Mobile*, and there was a small harbour at *Isle Dauphine*, a settlement was made suited to the harbour, with a guard-house for its security: so that these two settlements may be said to have made but one; both on account of their proximity, and necessary connection with each other. The settlement of *Mobile*, ten leagues, however, from its harbour, lies on the banks of the river of that name; and *Isle Dauphine*, over against the mouth of that river, is four leagues from the coast.

Though the settlement of *Mobile* be the oldest, yet it is far from being the most considerable. Only some inhabitants remained

there, the greatest part of the first inhabitants having left it, in order to settle on the river *Mississipi*, ever since *New Orleans* became the Capital of the Colony. That old Post is the ordinary residence of a King's Lieutenant, a regulating Commissary, and a Treasurer. The fort, with four bastions, terrassed and palisaded, has a garrison.

This Post is a check upon the nation of *Chactaws*, and cuts off the communication of the *English* with them; it protects the neighbouring nations, and keeps them in our alliance; in fine, it supports our peltry trade, which is considerable with the *Chactaws* and other nations \*.

\* Fort *Lewis* at *Mobile* is built upon the river that bears the same name, which falls into the Sea opposite to *Dauphine* Island. The fort is about 15 or 16 leagues distant from that Island; and is built of brick, fortified with four bastions, in the manner of *Vauban*, with half-moons, a covered way, and *glacis*. There is a magazine in it, with barracks for the troops of the garrison, which is generally pretty numerous, and a flag for the Commandant.

I must own, I never could see for what reason this fort was built, or what could be the use of it. For although it is 120 leagues from the capital, to go down the river, yet it is from thence that they must have every thing that is necessary for the support of the garrison: and the soil is so bad, being nothing but sand, that it produces nothing but *Pines* and *Firs*, with a little *Pulse*, which grows there

The

The same reason, which pointed out the necessity of this Post, with respect to the *Chactaws*, also shewed the necessity of building a fort at *Tombecké*, to check the *English* in their ambitious views on the side of the *Chicasaws*. That fort was built only since the war with the *Chicasaws* in 1736.

Near the river *Mobile* stands the small settlement of the *Pasca-Ogoulas*; which consists only of a few *Canadians*, lovers of tranquillity, which they prefer to all the advantages they could reap from commerce. They content themselves with a frugal country life, and never go to *New Orleans* but for necessities.

From that settlement quite to *New Orleans*, by the way of Lake *St. Louis*, there is no Post at present. Formerly, and just before the building of the Capital, there were the old and new *Biloxi*: settlements, which have

but very indifferently: so that there are here but very few people. The only advantage of this place is, that the air is mild and healthful, and that it affords a traffick with the *Spaniards* who are near it. The winter is the most agreeable season, as it is mild, and affords plenty of game. But in summer the heats are excessive; and the inhabitants have nothing hardly to live upon but fish, which are pretty plentiful on the coast, and in the rivers. *Dumont*, II. 80.

deserved

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deserved an oblivion as lasting, as their duration was short.

To proceed with order and perspicuity, we will go up the *Mississipi* from its mouth.

Fort *Balife* is at the entrance of the *Mississipi*, in  $29^{\circ}$  degrees North Latitude, and  $286^{\circ} 30'$  of Longitude. This fort is built on an isle, at one of the mouths of the *Mississipi*. Tho' there are but seventeen feet water in the channel, I have seen vessels of five hundred tun enter into it. I know not why this entrance is left so neglected, as we are not in want of able Engineers in *France*, in the Hydraulic branch, a part of the Mathematics, to which I have most applied myself. I know it is no easy matter to deepen or hollow the channel of a bar, that it may never after need clearing, and that the expences run high: But my zeal for promoting the advantage of this Colony having prompted me to make reflections on those Passes, or Entrances of the *Mississipi*, and being perfectly well acquainted both with the country and the nature of the soil, I dare flatter myself, I may be able to accomplish it, to the great benefit of the province, and acquit myself therein with honour,

honour, at a small charge, and in a manner not to need repetition \*.

I say, Fort *Balife* is built upon an island; a circumstance, I imagine, sufficient to make it understood, that this Fort is irregular; the figure and extent of this small island not admitting it to be otherwise.

In going up the *Mississipi*, we meet with nothing remarkable before we come to the *Detour aux Anglois, the English Reach*: In that part the river takes a large compass; so that the same wind, which was before fair, proves contrary in this elbow, or reach. For this reason it was thought proper to build two forts at that place, one on each side of the river, to check any attempts of strangers. These forts are more than sufficient to oppose the passage of an hundred sail; as ships can

\* Seven leagues above the mouth of the river we meet with two other Passes, as large as the middle one by which we entered; one is called the *Otter-pass*, and the other the *Eel-pass*; and they assure me, it is only by this last Pass that ships now go up or down the river, they having entirely deserted the antient middle Pass. *Dumont, I. 4.*

Many other bays and rivers, not known to our Authors, lying along the bay of *Mexico*, to the westward of the *Mississipi*, are described by Mr. *Coxe*, in his account of *Carolina*, called by the French *Louisiana*.

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go up the river, only one after another, and can neither cast anchor, nor come on shore to moor.

It will, perhaps, be thought extraordinary, that ships cannot anchor in this place. I imagine the reader will be of my opinion, when I tell him, the bottom is only a soft mud, or ooze, almost entirely covered with dead trees, and this for upwards of an hundred leagues. As to putting on shore, it is equally impossible and needless to attempt it; because the place where these forts stand, is but a neck of land between the river and the marshes: Now it is impossible for a shallop, or canoe, to come near to moor a vessel, in sight of a fort well guarded, or for an enemy to throw up a trench in a neck of land so soft. Besides, the situation of the two forts is such, that they may in a short time receive succours, both from the inhabitants, who are on the interior edge of the crescent, formed by the river, and from *New Orleans*, which is very near thereto.

The distance from this place to the Capital is reckoned six leagues by water, and the course nearly circular; the winding, or reach, having the figure of a C almost close. Both  
fides

sides of the river are lined with houses, which afford a beautiful prospect to the eye; however, as this voyage is tedious by water, it is often performed on horseback by land.

The great difficulties attending the going up the river under sail, particularly at the *English Reach*, for the reasons mentioned, put me upon devising a very simple and cheap machine, to make vessels go up with ease quite to *New Orleans*. Ships are sometimes a month in the passage from *Balise* to the Capital; whereas by my method, they would not be eight days, even with a contrary wind; and thus ships would go four times quicker than by towing, or turning it. This machine might be deposited at *Balise*, and delivered to the vessel, in order to go up the current, and be returned again on its setting sail. It is besides proper to observe, that this machine would be no detriment to the forts, as they would always have it in their power to stop the vessels of enemies, who might happen to use it.

*New Orleans*, the Capital of the Colony, is situated to the East, on the banks of the *Mississipi*, in 30° of North Latitude. At my first arrival in *Louisiana*, it existed only in  
name;



name; for on my landing I understood, M. de Biainville, Commandant General, was only gone to mark out the spot; whence he returned three days after our arrival at *Ile Dauphine*.

He pitched upon this spot in preference to many others, more agreeable and commodious; but for that time this was a place proper enough: Besides, it is not every man that can see so far as some others. As the principal settlement was then at *Mobile*, it was proper to have the Capital fixed at a place from which there could be an easy communication with this Post. And thus a better choice could not have been made, as the town being on the banks of the *Mississipi*, vessels, tho' of a thousand ton, may lay their sides close to the shore, even at low water; or at most, need only lay a small bridge, with two of their yards, in order to load or unload, to roll barrels and bales, &c. without fatiguing the ship's crew. This town is only a league from *St. John's Creek*, where passengers take water for *Mobile*, in going to which they pass *Lake St. Louis*, and from thence all along the coast; a communication which was necessary at that time.

I should

I should imagine, that if a town was at this day to be built in this Province, a rising ground would be pitched upon, to avoid inundations; besides, the bottom should be sufficiently firm, for bearing grand stone-edifices.

Such as have been a good way in the country, without seeing stone, or the least pebble, in upwards of a hundred leagues extent, will doubtless say, such a proposition is impossible, as they never observed stone proper for building in the parts they travelled over. I might answer, and tell them, they have eyes, and see not. I narrowly considered the nature of this country, and found quarries in it; and if there were any in the Colony I ought to find them, as my condition and profession of Architect should have procured me the knowledge of them.

After giving the situation of the Capital, it is proper I describe the order in which it is built.

The place of arms is in the middle of that part of the town which faces the river; in the middle of the ground of the place of arms stands the parish-church, called *St. Louis*, where the *Capuchins* officiate, whose house is  
to

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to the left of the Church. To the right stand the prison, or jail, and the guard-house : Both sides of the place of arms are taken up by two bodies or rows of barracks. This place stands all open to the river.

All the streets are laid out both in length and breadth by the line, and intersect and cross each other at right angles. The streets divide the town into sixty-six *Isles*; eleven along the river lengthwise, or in front, and six in depth : Each of those *Isles* is fifty square toises, and each again divided into twelve *Emplacements*, or compartments, for lodging as many families. The *Intendant's* house stands behind the barracks on the left; and the magazine, or warehouse-general behind the barracks on the right, on viewing the town from the river side. The *Governor's* house stands in the middle of that part of the town, from which we go from the place of arms to the habitation of the *Jesuits*, which is near the town. The house of the *Ursulin* Nuns is quite at the end of the town, to the right; as is also the hospital of the sick, of which the Nuns have the inspection. What I have just described faces the river.

On

On the banks of the river runs a causey, or mole, as well on the side of the town as on the opposite side, from the *English Reach* quite to the town, and about ten leagues beyond it; which makes about fifteen or sixteen leagues on each side the river; and which may be travelled in a coach or on horseback, on a bottom as smooth as a table.

The greatest part of the houses is of brick; the rest are of timber and brick.

The length of the causeys, I just mentioned, is sufficient to shew, that on these two sides of the *Missisipi* there are many habitations standing close together; each making a causey to secure his ground from inundations, which fail not to come every year with the spring: And at that time, if any ships happen to be in the harbour of *New Orleans*, they speedily set sail; because the prodigious quantity of dead wood, or trees torn up by the roots, which the river brings down, would lodge before the ship, and break the stoutest cables.

At the end of *St. John's Creek*, on the banks of the *Lake St. Louis*, there is a redoubt, and a guard to defend it.

From

From this Creek to the town, a part of its banks is inhabited by planters; in like manner as are the long banks of another Creek: The habitations of this last go under the name of *Gentilly*.

After these habitations, which are upon the *Mississipi* quite beyond the *Cannes brûlées*, burnt Canes, we meet none till we come to the *Oumas*, a petty nation so called. This settlement is inconsiderable, tho' one of the oldest next to the Capital. It lies on the East of the *Mississipi*.

The *Baton Rouge* is also on the East side of the *Mississipi*, and distant twenty-six leagues from *New Orleans*: It was formerly the Grant of M. *Artaquette d'Iron*: It is there we see the famous cypress-tree, of which a ship-carpenter offered to make two pettyaugrea, one of sixteen, the other of fourteen tons. Some one of the first adventurers, who landed in this quarter, happened to say, that tree would make a fine walking-stick; and, as cypress is a red wood, it was afterwards called *le Baton Rouge*. Its height could never be measured, it rises so out of sight.

Two

Two leagues higher up than *le Baton Rouge*, was the Grant of M. *Paris du Vernai*. This settlement is called *Bayou-Ogoulas*, from a nation of that name, which formerly dwelt here. It is on the west side of the *Mississipi*, and twenty eight leagues from *New Orleans*.

At a league on this side of *Pointe Coupée*, are *les Petits Ecores*, (little Cliffs,) where was the Grant of the Marquis *de Mezieres*. At this Grant were a Director and Under-Director; but the Surgeon found out the secret of remaining sole master. The place is very beautiful, especially behind *les Petits Ecores*, where we go up by a gentle ascent. Near these Cliffs, a rivulet falls into the *Mississipi*, into which a spring discharges its waters, which so attract the Buffalo's, that they are very often found on its banks. 'Tis a pity this ground was deserted; there was enough of it to make a very considerable Grant: A good water-mill also might be built on the brook I just mentioned.

At forty leagues from *New Orleans* lies *la Pointe Coupée*, so called, because the *Mississipi* made there an elbow, or winding, and formed the figure of a circle, open only about an hundred and odd toises, thro' which it made  
itself

itself a shorter way, and where all its water runs at present. This was not the work of Nature alone: Two travellers, coming down the *Mississipi*, were forced to stop short at this place; because they observed at a distance the surff, or waves, to be very high, the wind beating against the current, and the river being out, so that they durst not venture to proceed. Just by them passed a rivulet, caused by the inundation, which might be a foot deep, by four or five feet broad, more or less. One of the travellers, seeing himself without any thing to do, took his fusil, and followed the course of this rivulet, in hopes of killing some game. He had not gone an hundred toises, before he was put into a very great surprize, on perceiving a great opening, as when one is just getting out of a thick forest. He continues to advance, sees a large extent of water, which he takes for a lake; but turning on his left, he espies *les Petits Ecores*, just mentioned, and by experience he knew, he must go ten leagues to get thither: Upon this he knew, these were the waters of the river. He runs to acquaint his companion: This last wants to be sure of it: Certain as they are both of it, they resolve, that it was necessary to cut away the roots, which stood  
in



in the passage, and to level the more elevated places. They attempted at length to pass their pettyaugre through, by pushing it before them. They succeeded beyond their expectation ; the water, which came on, aided them as much by its weight, as by its depth, which was increased by the obstacle it met in its way : And they saw themselves in a short time in the *Mississipi*, ten leagues lower down than they were an hour before ; or than they would have been, if they had followed the bed of the river, as they were formerly constrained to do.

This little labour of our travellers moved the earth ; the roots being cut away in part proved no longer an obstacle to the course of the water ; the slope or descent in this small passage was equal to that in the river for the ten leagues of the compass it took ; in fine, Nature, tho' feebly aided, performed the rest. The first time I went up the river, its entire body of water passed thro' this part ; and tho' the channel was only made six years before, the old bed was almost filled with the ooze, which the river had there deposited ; and I have seen trees growing there of an astonishing size, that one might wonder, how they should come to be so large in so short a time.

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In this spot, which is called *la Pointe Coupée*, the *Cut-point*, was the Grant of M. de Meuse, at present one of the most considerable Posts of the Colony, with a fort, a garrison, and an Officer to command there. The river is, on each side, lined with inhabitants, who make a great deal of tobacco. There an Inspector resides, who examines and receives it, in order to prevent the merchants being defrauded. The inhabitants of the west side have high lands behind them, which form a very fine country, as I have observed above.

Twenty leagues above this *Cut-point*, and sixty leagues from *New Orleans*, we meet with the *Red River*. In an island, formed by that river, stands a *French Post*, with a fort, a garrison, its Commandant and Officers. The first inhabitants, who settled there, were some soldiers of that Post, discharged after their time of serving was expired, who set themselves to make tobacco in the island. But the fine sand, carried by the wind upon the leaves of the tobacco, made it of a bad quality, which obliged them to abandon the island, and settle on the continent, where they found a good soil, on which they made better tobacco. This Post is called the *Nachitoches*, from a nation of that name,  
settled

settled in the neighbourhood. At this Post *M. de St. Denis* commanded.

Several inhabitants of *Louisiana*, allured thither by the hopes of making soon great fortunes, because distant only seven leagues from the *Spaniards*, imagined the abundant treasures of *New Mexico* would pour in upon them. But in this they happened to be mistaken; for the *Spanish* Post, called the *Adaïes*, has less money in it than the poorest village in *Europe*; the *Spaniards* being ill clad, ill fed, and always ready to buy goods of the *French* on credit: which may be said in general of all the *Spaniards* of *New Mexico*, amidst all their mines of gold and silver. This we are well informed of by our merchants, who have dealt with the *Spaniards* of this Post, and found their habitations and way of living to be very mean, and more so than those of the *French*.

From the confluence of this *Red River*, in going up the *Mississipi*, as we have hitherto done, we find, about thirty leagues higher up, the Post of the *Natchez*.

Let not the reader be displeased, at my saying often, *nearly*, or *about so many leagues*: We can ascertain nothing justly as to the

distances in a country where we travel only by water. Those who go up the *Mississipi*, having more trouble, and taking more time than those who go down, reckon the route more or less long, according to the time in which they make their voyage ; besides, when the water is high, it covers passes, which often shorten the way a great deal.

The *Natchez* are situate in about  $32^{\circ}$  odd minutes of North Latitude, and  $280^{\circ}$  of Longitude. The fort at this Post stands two hundred feet perpendicular above low-water mark. From this fort the point of view extends West of the *Mississipi* quite to the horizon, that is, on the side opposite to that where the fort stands, tho' the west side be covered with woods ; because the foot of the fort stands much higher than the trees. On the same side with the fort, the country holds at a pretty equal height, and declines only by a gentle, and almost imperceptible slope, insensibly losing itself from one eminence to another.

The nation which gave name to this Post, inhabited this very place, at a league from the landing-place on the *Mississipi*, and dwelt on the banks of a rivulet, which has only a course of four or five leagues to that river.

All

All travellers, who passed and stopped here, went to pay a visit to the natives, the *Natchez*. The distance of the league they went to them is through so fine and good a country, the natives themselves were so obliging and familiar, and the women so amiable, that all travellers failed not to make the greatest encomiums both on the country, and on the native inhabitants.

The just commendations bestowed upon them, drew thither inhabitants in such numbers, as to determine the Company to give orders for building a fort there, as well to support the *French* already settled, and those who should afterwards come thither, as to be a check on that nation. The garrison consisted only of between thirty and forty men, a Captain, a Lieutenant, Under-Lieutenant, and two Serjeants.

The Company had there a warehouse for the supply of the inhabitants, who were daily increasing, in spite of all the efforts of one of the principal Superiors, who put all imaginable obstacles in the way : And notwithstanding the progress this settlement made, and the encomiums bestowed upon it, and which it deserved, God in his providence gave it up to the rage of its enemies, in order to take

vengeance of the sins committed there; for without mentioning those, who escaped the general massacre, there perished of them upwards of five hundred.

Forty leagues higher up than the *Natchez* is the river *Yasou*. The Grant of M. *le Blanc*, Minister, or Secretary at War, was settled there, four leagues from the *Mississipi*, as you go up this little river \*. There a fort stands, with a company of men, commanded by a Captain, a Lieutenant, Under-Lieutenant, and two Serjeants. This company, together with the servants, were in the pay of this Minister.

This Post was very advantageously situated, as well for the goodness of the air, as the quality of the soil, like to that of the *Natchez*, as for the landing-place, which was very commodious, and for the commerce with the natives, if our people but knew how to gain, and preserve their friendship. But the neighbourhood of the *Chicasaws*, ever fast friends of the *English*, and ever instigated by

\* The village of the *Indians*, (*Yasous*) is a league from this settlement; and on one side of it there is a hill, on which they pretend, that the *English* formerly had a Fort; accordingly there are still some traces of it to be seen. *Dumont*, II. 296.

them

them to give us uneasiness, almost cut off any hopes of succeeding. This Post was, on these accounts, threatned with utter ruin, sooner or later; as actually happened in 1722, by means of those wretched *Chicasaws*; who came in the night and murdered the people in the settlements that were made by two serjeants out of the fort. But a boy, who was scalped by them, was cured, and escaped with life.

Sixty miles higher up than the *Yasouz*, and at the distance of two hundred leagues from *New Orleans*, dwell the *Arkansas*, to the west of the *Mississipi*. At the entrance of the river which goes by the name of that nation, there is a small fort, which defends that Post, which is the second of the Colony in point of time.

It is a great pity, so good and fine a country is distant from the sea upwards of two hundred leagues. I cannot omit mentioning, that wheat thrives extremely well here, without our being obliged ever to manure the land; and I am so prepossessed in its favour, that I persuade myself, the beauty of the climate has a great influence on the character of the inhabitants, who are at the same time very gentle and very brave. They have ever had an inviolable friendship for the *French*, uninflu-



enced thereto either by fear, or views of interest; and live with the *French* near them as brethren rather than as neighbours.

In going from the *Arkansas* to the *Illinois*, we meet with the river *St. Francis*, thirty leagues more to the North, and on the west side of the *Mississipi*. There a small fort has been built since my return to *France*. To the East of the *Mississipi*, but more to the North, we also meet, at about thirty leagues, the river *Margot*, near the steep banks of *Prud'homme*: There a fort was also built, called *Assumption*, for undertaking an expedition against the *Chicasaws*, who are nearly in the same latitude. These two forts, after that expedition, were entirely demolished by the *French*, because they were thought to be no longer necessary. It is, however, probable enough, that this fort *Assumption* would have been a check upon the *Chicasaws*, who are always roving in those parts. Besides, the steep banks of *Prud'homme* contain iron and pit-coal. On the other hand, the country is very beautiful, and of an excellent quality, abounding with plains and meadows, which favour the excursions of the *Chicasaws*, and which they will ever continue to make upon us, till we have the address to divert them from their commerce with the *English*.

We

We have no other *French* settlements to mention in *Louisiana*, but that of the *Illinois*; in which part of the colony we had the first fort. At present the *French* settlement here is on the banks of the *Mississipi*, near one of the villages of the *Illinois* \*. That Post is commanded by one of the principal Officers; and M. de Bois-Briant, who was Lieutenant of the King, has commanded at it.

Many *French* inhabitants, both from *Canada* and *Europe*, live there at this day; but the *Canadians* make three fourths at least. The *Jesuits* have the Cure there, with a fine habitation and a mill; in digging the foundation of which last, a quarry of orbicular flat stones was found, about two inches in diameter, of the shape of a buffoon's cap, with six sides, whose groove was set with small buttons of the

\* They have, or had formerly, other settlements hereabouts, at *Kaskaskies*, Fort *Chartres*, *Tamaroas*, and on the River *Maramag*, on the West side of the *Mississipi*, where they found those mines, that gave rise to the *Mississipi* scheme in 1719. In 1742, when *John Howard*, *Salle*, and others, were sent from *Virginia* to view those countries, they were made prisoners by the *French*; who came from a settlement they had on an island in the *Mississipi*, a little above the *Ohio*, where they made salt, lead, &c. and went from thence to *New Orleans*, in a fleet of boats and canoes, guarded by a large armed schooner. *Report of the Government of Virginia.*

size of the head of a minikin or small pin. Some of these stones were bigger, some smaller; between the stones, which could not be joined, there was no earth found.

The *Canadians*, who are numerous in *Louisiana*, are most of them at the *Illinois*. This climate, doubtless, agrees better with them, because nearer *Canada* than any other settlement of the Colony. Besides, in coming from *Canada*, they always pass thro' this settlement; which makes them choose to continue here. They bring their wives with them, or marry the *French* or *Indian* women. The ladies even venture to make this long and painful voyage from *Canada*, in order to end their days in a country, which the *Canadians* look upon as a terrestrial paradise\*.

\* It is this that has made the *French* undergo so many long and perilous voyages in *North-America*, upwards of two thousand miles, against currents, cataracts, and boisterous winds on the lakes, in order to get to this settlement of the *Illinois*; which is nigh to the *Forks of the Mississippi*, the most important place in all the inland parts of *North-America*, to which the *French* will sooner or later remove from *Canada*; and there erect another *Montreal*, that will be much more dangerous and prejudicial to us, than ever the other in *Canada* was. They will here be in the midst of all their old friends and allies, and much more convenient to carry on a trade with them, to spirit them up against the *English*, &c. than ever they were at *Montreal*. To this settlement, where they likewise are not without good hopes of finding mines, the *French* will for ever be removing, as long as any of them are left in *Canada*.

## CHAP. X.

*The Voyages of the French to the Missouris, Canzas, and Padoucas. The Settlements they in vain attempted to make in those Countries; with a description of an extraordinary Phenomenon.*

THE *Padoucas*, who lie West by North-west of the *Missouris*, happened at that time to be at war with the neighbouring nations, the *Canzas*, *Othouez*, *Aiaouez*, *Osages*, *Missouris*, and *Panimahas*, all in amity with the *French*. To conciliate a peace between all these nations and the *Padoucas*, M. de *Bourgmont* sent to engage them, as being our allies, to accompany him on a journey to the *Padoucas*, in order to bring about a general pacification, and by that means to facilitate the traffick, or truck between them and us, and conclude an alliance with the *Padoucas*.

For this purpose M. de *Bourgmont* set out on the 3d of *July*, 1724, from *Fort Orleans*, which lies near the *Missouris*, a nation dwelling on the banks of the river of that name,

in order to join that people, and then to proceed to the *Canzas*, where the general rendezvous of the several nations was appointed.

M. de Bourgmont was accompanied by an hundred *Missouris*, commanded by their Grand Chief, and eight other Chiefs of war, and by sixty-four *Osages*, commanded by four Chiefs of war, besides a few *Frenchmen*. On the 6th he joined the Grand Chief, six other Chiefs of war, and several Warriors of the *Canzas*, who presented him the Pipe of Peace, and performed the honours, customary on such occasions, to the *Missouris* and *Osages*.

On the 7th they passed thro' extensive meadows and woods, and arrived on the banks of the river *Missouri*, over against the village of the *Canzas*.

On the 8th the *French* crossed the *Missouri* in a pettyauger, the *Indians* on floats of cane, and the horses were swam over. They landed within a gun-shot of the *Canzas*, who flocked to receive them with the Pipe; their Grand Chief, in the name of the nation, assuring M. de Bourgmont, that all their Warriors would accompany him in his journey to the *Padoucas*, with protestations of friendship and fidelity, confirmed by smoking the Pipe. The same

same assurances were made him by the other Chiefs, who entertained him in their huts, and \* rubbed him over and his companions.

On the 9th M. *de Bourgmont* dispatched five *Missouris* to acquaint the *Othouez* with his arrival at the *Canzas*. They returned on the 10th, and brought word that the *Othouez* promised to hunt for him and his Warriors, and to cause provisions to be dried for the journey; that their Chief would set out directly, in order to wait on M. *de Bourgmont*, and carry him the word of the whole nation.

The *Canzas* continued to regale the *French*; brought them also great quantities of grapes, of which the *French* made a good wine.

On the 24th of *July*, at six in the morning, this little army set out, consisting of three hundred Warriors, including the Chiefs of the *Canzas*, three hundred women, about five hundred young people, and at least three hundred dogs. The women carried considerable loads, to the astonishment of the *French*, unaccustomed to such a sight. The young women also were well loaded for their years;

\* It is thus they express their joy and caresses, at the sight of a person they respect.

and

and the dogs were made to trail a part of the baggage, and that in the following manner : The back of the dog was covered with a skin, with its pile on; then the dog was girthed round, and his breast-leather put on; and taking two poles of the thickness of one's arm, and twelve feet long, they fastened their two ends half a foot asunder, laying on the dog's saddle the thong that fastened the two poles; and to the poles they also fastened, behind the dog, a ring, or hoop, lengthwise, on which they laid the load.

On the 28th and 29th the army crossed several brooks and small rivers, passed thro' several meadows and thickets, meeting every where on their way a great deal of game.

On the 30th *M. de Bourgmont*, finding himself very ill, was obliged to have a litter made, in order to be carried back to Fort *Orleans* till he should recover. Before his departure he gave orders about two *Padouca* slaves, whom he had ransomed, and was to send before him to that nation, in order to ingratiate himself by this act of generosity. These he caused to be sent by one *Gaillard*, who was to tell their nation, that *M. de Bourgmont*, being fallen ill on his intended journey



journey to their country, was obliged to return home ; but that as soon as he got well again, he would resume his journey to their country, in order to procure a general peace between them and the other nations.

On the evening of the same day arrived at the camp the Grand Chief of the *Ojibwez* : who acquainted M. de *Bourgmont*, that a great part of his Warriors waited for him on the road to the *Padoucas*, and that he came to receive his orders ; but was sorry to find him ill.

At length, on the 4th of *August*, M. de *Bourgmont* set out from the *Ganzas* in a pettyauger, and arrived the 5th at Fort Orleans.

On the 6th of *September* M. de *Bourgmont*, who was still at Fort Orleans, was informed of the arrival of the two *Padouca* slaves on the 25th of *August* at their own nation ; and that meeting on the way a body of *Padouca* hunters a day's journey from their village, the *Padouca* slaves made the signal of their nation, by throwing their mantles thrice over their heads : That they spoke much in commendation of the generosity of M. de *Bourgmont*,  
who

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who had ransomed them: Told all he had done in order to a general pacification: In fine, extolled the *French* to such a degree, that their discourse, held in presence of the Grand Chief and of the whole nation, diffused an universal joy: That *Gaillard* told them, the flag they saw was the symbol of Peace, and the word of the Sovereign of the *French*: That in a little time the several nations would come to be like brethren, and have but one heart.

The Grand Chief of the *Padoucas* was so well assured that the war was now at an end, that he dispatched twenty *Padoucas* with *Gaillard* to the *Canzas*, by whom they were extremely well received. The *Padoucas*, on their return home, related their good reception among the *Canzas*; and as a plain and real proof of the pacification, mediated by the *French*, brought with them fifty of the *Canzas*, and three of their women; who, in their turn, were received by the *Padoucas* with all possible marks of friendship.

Tho' M. de *Bourgmont* was but just recovering of his illness; he, however, prepared for his departure, and on the 20th of *September* actually set out from *Fort Orleans*  
by

by water, and arrived at the *Canzas* on the 27th.

*Gaillard* arrived on the 2d of *October* at the camp of the *Canzas*, with three Chiefs of war, and three Warriors of the *Padoucas*, who were received by *M. de Bourgmont* with flag displayed, and other testimonies of civility, and had presents made them of several goods, proper for their use.

On the 4th of *October* arrived at the *Canzas* the Grand Chief, and seven other Chiefs of war of the *Othouez*; and next day, very early, six Chiefs of war of the *Aiaouez*.

*M. de Bourgmont* assembled all the Chiefs present, and setting them round a large fire made before his tent, rose up, and addressing himself to them, said; he was come to declare to them, in the name of his Sovereign, and of the Grand *French* Chief in the country \*, that it was the will of his Sovereign, they should all live in peace for the future, like brethren and friends, if they expected to enjoy his love and protection: And since, says he, you are here all assembled this day,

\* The Governor of *Louisiana*.

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it is good you conclude a peace, and all smoke in the same pipe.

The Chiefs of these different nations rose up to a man, and said with one consent, they were well satisfied to comply with his request; and instantly gave each other their Pipes of Peace.

After an entertainment prepared for them, the *Padoucas* sung the Songs, and danced the Dances of Peace; a kind of pantomimes, representing the innocent pleasures of peace.

On the 6th of *October* M. de *Bourgmont* caused three lots of goods to be made out; one for the *Othouez*, one for the *Aiaouez*, and one for the *Panimahas*, which last arrived in the mean time; and made them all smoke in the same Pipe of Peace.

On the 8th M. de *Bourgmont* set out from the *Canzas* with all the baggage, and the flag displayed, at the head of the *French* and such *Indians* as he had pitched on to accompany him, in all forty persons. The goods intended for presents were loaded on horses. As they set out late, they travelled but five leagues, in which they crossed a small river  
and

and two brooks, in a fine country, with little wood.

The same day *Gaillard*, *Quenel*, and two *Padoucas* were dispatched to acquaint their nation with the march of the *French*. That day they travelled ten leagues, crossed one river and two brooks.

The 10th they made eight leagues, crossed two small rivers and three brooks. To their right and left they had several small hills, on which one could observe pieces of rock, even with the ground. Along the rivers there is found a slate, and in the meadows, a reddish marble, standing out of the earth one, two, and three feet; some pieces of it upwards of six feet in diameter.

The 11th they passed over several brooks and a small river, and then the river of the *Canzas*, which had only three feet water. Further on, they found several brooks, issuing from the neighbouring little hills. The river of the *Canzas* runs directly from West to East, and falls into the *Missouri*; is very great in floods, because, according to the report of the *Padoucas*, it comes a great way off. The woods, which border this river, afford a retreat to numbers of buffaloes and other game.

On

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On the left were seen great eminences, with hanging rocks.

The 12th of *October*, the journey, as the preceding day, was extremely diversified by the variety of objects. They crossed eight brooks, beautiful meadows, covered with herds of elks and buffaloes. To the right the view was unbounded, but to the left small hills were seen at a distance, which from time to time presented the appearance of ancient castles.

The 13th, on their march they saw the meadows covered almost entirely with buffaloes, elks, and deer; so that one could scarce distinguish the different herds, so numerous and so intermixed they were. The same day they passed thro' a wood almost two leagues long, and a pretty rough ascent; a thing which seemed extraordinary, as till then they only met with little groves, the largest of which scarce contained an hundred trees, but freight as a cane; groves too small to afford a retreat to a quarter of the buffaloes and elks seen there.

The 14th the march was retarded by ascents and descents; from which issued many springs of an extreme pure water, forming several brooks, whose waters uniting, make  
little

little rivers that fall into the river of the *Canzas*: And doubtless it is this multitude of brooks, which traverse and water these meadows, extending a great way out of sight, that invite those numerous herds of buffaloes.

The 15th they crossed several brooks and two little rivers. It is chiefly on the banks of the waters, that we find those enchanting groves, adorned with grass underneath, and so clear of underwood, that we may there hunt down the stag with ease.

The 16th they continued to pass over a similar landskip, the beauties of which were never cloying. Besides the larger game, these groves afforded also a retreat to flocks of turkeys.

The 17th they made very little way, because they wanted to get into the right road, from which they had strayed the two preceding days; which they at length recovered; and at a small distance from their camp, saw an encampment of the *Padoucas*, which appeared to have been quitted only about eight days before. This yielded them so much the more pleasure, as it shewed the nearness of that nation, which made them encamp, after having travelled only six leagues, in order to make  
signals



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signals from that place, by setting fire to the parts of the meadows, which the general fire had spared. In a little time after, the signal was answered in the same manner ; and confirmed by the arrival of the two *Frenchmen*, who had orders given them to make the signals.

On the 18th they met a little river of brackish water ; on the banks of which they found another encampment of the *Padoucas*, which appeared to have been abandoned but four days before : At half a league further on, a great smoke was seen to the west, at no great distance off, which was answered by setting fire to the parts of the meadows, untouched by the general fire.

About half an hour after, the *Padoucas* were observed coming at full gallop with the flag, which *Gaillard* had left with them on his first journey to their country. *M. de Bourgmont* instantly ordered the *French* under arms ; and at the head of his people thrice saluted these strangers with his flag ; which they also returned thrice, by raising their mantles as many times over their heads.

After this first ceremony, *M. de Bourgmont* made them all sit down, and smoke in the  
Pipe

Pipe of Peace. This action, being the seal of the peace, diffused a general joy, accompanied with loud acclamations.

The *Padoucas*, after mounting the *French* and the *Indians* who accompanied them, on their horses, set out for their camp: and after a journey of three leagues, arrived at their encampment; but left a distance of a gun-shot between the two camps.

The day after their arrival at the *Padoucas*, M. de *Bourgmont* caused the goods, allotted for this nation, to be unpacked, and the different species parcelled out, which he made them all presents of\*.

After which M. de *Bourgmont* sent for the Grand Chief and other Chiefs of the *Padoucas*, who came to the camp to the number of two hundred: And placing himself between them and the goods, thus parcelled and laid out to view, told them, he was sent by his Sovereign to carry them the word of Peace, this flag, and these goods, and to exhort them

\* Red and blue *Limburgs*, shirts, fusils, sabres, gun-powder, ball, musket-flints, gun-screws, mattocks, hatchets, looking-glasses, *Flemish* knives, wood-cutters knives, clasp-knives, scissars, combs, bells, awls, needles, drinking-glasses, brass-wire, boxes, rings, &c.

to live as brethren with their neighbours, the *Panimahas*, *Aiaouez*, *Othouez*, *Canzas*, *Misfouris*, *Osages*, and *Illinois*, to traffick and truck freely together, and with the *French*.

He at the same time gave the flag to the Grand Chief of the *Padoucas*, who received it with demonstrations of respect, and told him : I accept this flag, which you present to me on the part of your Sovereign : We rejoice at our having peace with all the nations you have mentioned ; and promise in the name of our nation never to make war on any of your allies ; but receive them, when they come among us, as our brethren ; as we shall in like manner, the *French*, and conduct them, when they want to go to the *Spaniards*, who are but twelve days journey from our village, and who truck with us in horses, of which they have such numbers, they know not what to do with them ; also in bad hatchets of a soft iron, and some knives, whose points they break off, lest we should use them one day against themselves. You may command all my Warriors ; I can furnish you with upwards of two thousand. In my own, and in the name of my whole nation, I entreat you would send some *Frenchmen* to trade with us ; we can supply them with

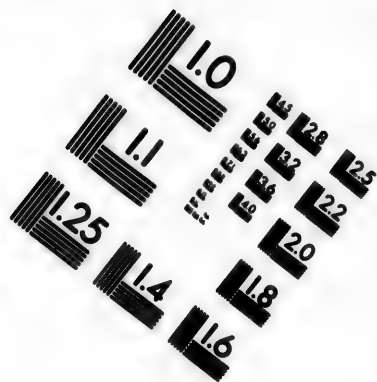
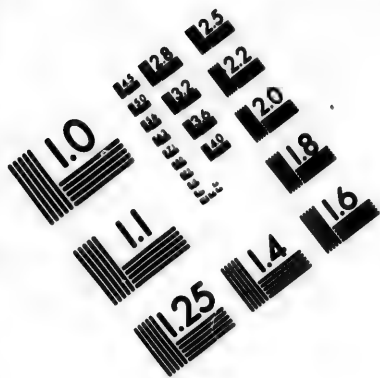
with horses, which we truck with the *Spaniards* for buffalo-mantles, and with great quantities of furs.

Before I quit the *Padoucas*, I shall give a summary of their manners; it may not, perhaps, be disagreeable to know, in what respects they differ from other *Indian* nations\*.

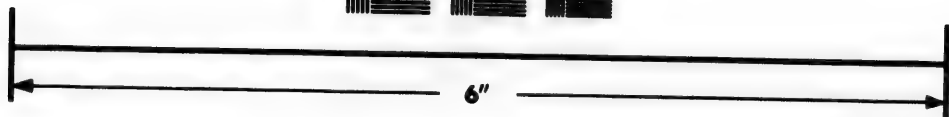
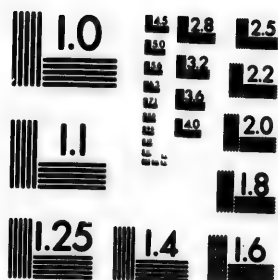
The *Padoucas*, who live at a distance from the *Spaniards*, cultivate no grain, and live only on hunting. But they are not to be considered as a wandering nation, tho' employed in hunting winter and summer; seeing they have large villages, consisting of a great number of cabins, which contain very numerous families: These are their permanent abodes; from which a hundred hunters set out at a time with their horses, their bows, and a good stock of arrows. They go thus two or three days journey from home, where they find herds of buffaloes, the least of which consists of a hundred head. They load their horses with their baggage, tents, and children, conducted by a man on horseback: By this means

\* The Author should likewise have informed us of the fate of those intended settlements of the *French*, which, *Dumont* tells us, were destroyed, and all the *French* murdered by the *Indians*, particularly among the *Missouris*; which is confirmed below in book II. ch. 7.





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the men, women, and young people travel unencumbered and light, without being fatigued by the journey. When come to the hunting-spot, they encamp near a brook, where there is always wood ; the horses they tie by one of their fore-feet with a string to a stake or bush.

Next morning they each of them mount a horse, and proceed to the first herd, with the wind at their back, to the end the buffaloes may scent them, and take to flight, which they never fail to do, because they have a very quick scent. Then the hunters pursue them close at an easy gallop, and in a crescent, or half ring, till they hang out the tongue thro' fatigue, and can do no more than just walk : The hunters then dismount, point a dart at the extremity of the shoulder, and kill each of them one cow, sometimes more : For, as I said above, they never kill the males. They then flay them, take out the entrails, and cut the carcase in two ; the head, feet, and entrails they leave to the wolves and other carnivorous animals : The skin they lay on the horse, and on that the flesh, which they carry home. Two days after they go out again ; and then they bring home the meat stript from the bones ; the women and young people dress it in the

*Indian*

*Indian* fashion ; while the men return for some days longer to hunt in the same manner. They carry home their dry provisions, and let their horses rest for three or four days : At the end of which, those who remained in the village, set out with the others to hunt in the like manner ; which has made ignorant travellers affirm, this people was a wandering nation.

If they sow little or no maiz, they as little plant any citruls, never any tobacco ; which last the *Spaniards* bring them in rolls, along with the horses, they truck with them for buffalo-mantles.

The nation of the *Padoucas* is very numerous, extends almost two hundred leagues, and they have villages quite close to the *Spaniards* of *New Mexico*. They are acquainted with silver, and made the *French* understand, they worked at the mines. The inhabitants of the villages at a distance from the *Spaniards* have knives made of fire-stone, (*pierre de feu*,) of which they also make hatchets ; the largest to fell middling and little trees with ; the less, to slay and cut up the beasts they kill.

These people are far from being savage, nor would it be a difficult matter to civilize them ; a plain proof they have had long intercourse with the *Spaniards*. The few days the *French* stayed among them, they were become very familiar, and would fain have *M. de Bourgmont* leave some *Frenchmen* among them ; especially they of the village at which the peace was concluded with the other nations. This village consisted of an hundred and forty huts, containing about eight hundred warriors, fifteen hundred women, and at least two thousand children, some *Padoucas* having four wives. When they are in want of horses, they train up great dogs to carry their baggage.

The men for the most part wear breeches and stockings all of a piece, made of dressed skins, in the manner of the *Spaniards*: The women also wear petticoats and bodices all of a piece, adorning their waists with fringes of dressed skins.

They are almost without any *European* goods among them, and have but a faint knowledge of them. They knew nothing of fire-arms before the arrival of *M. de Bourgmont* ; were much frightened at them ; and on hearing the report, quaked and bowed their heads.

They

They generally go to war on horseback, and cover their horses with dressed leather, hanging down quite round, which secures them from darts. All we have hitherto remarked, is peculiar to this people, besides the other usages they have in common with the nations of *Louisiana*.

On the 22d of *October* M. de *Bourgmont* set out from the *Padoucas*, and travelled only five leagues that day : The 23d, and the three following days, he travelled in all forty leagues : The 27th, six leagues : The 28th, eight leagues : The 29th, six leagues ; and the 30th, as many : The 31st, he travelled only four leagues, and that day arrived within half a league of the *Canzas*. From the *Padoucas* to the *Canzas*, proceeding always East, we may now very safely reckon sixty five leagues and a half. The river of the *Canzas* is parallel to this route.

On the 1st of *November* they all arrived on the banks of the *Missouri*. M. de *Bourgmont* embarked the 2d on a canoe of skins ; and at length, on the 5th of *November*, arrived at *Fort Orleans*.

I shall here subjoin the description of one of these canoes. They choose for the pur-

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pose branches of a white and supple wood, such as poplar; which are to form the ribs or curves, and are fastened on the outside with three poles, one at bottom and two on the sides, to form the keel; to these curves two other stouter poles are afterwards made fast, to form the gunnels; then they tighten these sides with chords, the length of which is in proportion to the intended breadth of the canoe: After which they tie fast the ends. When all the timbers are thus disposed, they sew on the skins, which they take care previously to soak a considerable time, to render them manageable.

From the account of this journey, extracted and abridged from *M. de Bourgmont's Journal*, we cannot fail to observe the care and attention necessary to be employed in such enterprizes; the prudence and policy requisite to manage the natives, and to behave with them in an affable manner.

If we view these nations with an eye to Commerce, what advantages might not be derived from them, as to furs? A Commerce not only very lucrative, but capable of being carried on without any risque; especially if we would follow the plan, I  
am

am to lay down, under the article, *Commerce*.

The relation of this Journey shews, moreover, that *Louisiana* maintains its good qualities throughout; and that the natives of *North America* derive their origin from the same country, since at bottom they all have the same manners and usages, as also the same manner of speaking and thinking.

I, however, except the *Natchez*, and the people they call their brethren, who have preserved festivals and ceremonies, which clearly shew, they have a far nobler origin. Besides, the richness of their language distinguishes them from all those other people that came from *Tartary*; whose language, on the contrary, is very barren: But if they resemble the others in certain customs, they were constrained thereto from the ties of a common society with them, as in their wars, embassies, and in every thing that regards the common interests of these nations.

Before I put an end to this chapter, I shall relate an extraordinary phænomenon which appeared in *Louisiana*.

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Towards the end of *May* 1726, the sun was then concealed for a whole day by large clouds, but very distinct one from another; they left but little void space between, to permit the view of the azure sky, and but in very few places: The whole day was very calm; in the evening especially these clouds were entirely joined; no sky was to be seen; but all the different configurations of the clouds were distinguishable: I observed, they stood very high above the earth.

The weather being so disposed, the sun was preparing to set. I saw him in the instant he touched the horizon, because there was a little clear space between that and the clouds. A little after, these clouds turned luminous, or reflected the light: The contour or outlines of most of them seemed to be bordered with gold, others but with a faint tincture thereof. It would be a very difficult matter to describe all the beauties, which these different colourings presented to the view: But the whole together formed the finest prospect I ever beheld of the kind.

I had my face turned to the East; and in the little time the sun formed this decoration, he proceeded to hide himself more and more; when sufficiently low, so that the shadow of the  
the



the earth could appear on the convexity of the clouds, there was observed as if a veil, stretched from North to South, had concealed or removed the light from off that part of the clouds, which extended eastwards, and made them dark, without hindering their being perfectly well distinguished; so that all on the same line were partly luminous, partly dark.

This very year I had a strong inclination to quit the Post at the *Natchez*, where I had continued for eight years. I had taken that resolution, notwithstanding my attachment to that settlement. I sold off my effects and went down to *New Orleans*, which I found greatly altered, by being entirely built. I intended to return to *Europe*; but M. *Perier*, the Governor, pressed me so much, that I accepted the inspection of the plantation of the Company; which, in a little time after, became the King's.

## C H A P. XI.

*The War with the Chitimachas. The Conspiracy of the Negroes against the French. Their Execution.*

**B**EFORE my arrival in *Louisiana*, we happened to be at war with the nation of the *Chitimachas*; owing to one of that people, who being gone to dwell in a bye-place on the banks of the *Mississipi*, had assassinated M. *de St. Come*, a Missionary of that Colony; who, in going down the river, imagined he might in safety retire into this man's hut for a night. M. *de Biainville* charged the whole nation with this assassination; and in order to save his own people, caused them to be attacked by several nations in alliance with the *French*.

Prowess is none of the greatest qualities of the *Indians*, much less of the *Chitimachas*. They were therefore worsted, and the loss of their bravest warriors constrained them to sue for peace. This the Governor granted, on condition, that they brought him the head of the assassin; which they accordingly did, and concluded a peace by the ceremony of the *Calumet*, hereafter described.

At

At the time the succours were expected from *France*, in order to destroy the *Natchez*, the *Negroes* formed a design to rid themselves of all the *French* at once, and to settle in their room, by making themselves masters of the Capital, and of all the property of the *French*. It was discovered in the following manner.

A female *Negro* receiving a violent blow from a *French* soldier, for refusing to obey him, said in her passion, that the *French* should not long insult *Negroes*. Some *Frenchmen*, overhearing these threats, brought her before the Governor, who sent her to prison. The Judge Criminal not being able to draw any thing out of her, I told the Governor, who seemed to pay no great regard to her threats, that I was of opinion, that a man in liquor, and a woman in passion, generally speak truth. It is therefore highly probable, said I, that there is some truth in what she said: And if so, there must be some conspiracy, ready to break out, which cannot be formed without many *Negroes* of the King's plantation being accomplices therein: And if there are any, I take upon me, said I, to find them out, and arrest them, if necessary, without any disorder or tumult.

The Governor and the whole Court approved of my reasons : I went that very evening to the camp of the *Negroes*, and from hut to hut, till I saw a light. In this hut I heard them talking together of their scheme. One of them was my first commander and my confidant, which surprized me greatly ; his name was *Samba*.

I speedily retired for fear of being discovered ; and in two days after, eight *Negroes*, who were at the head of the conspiracy, were separately arrested, unknown to each other, and clapt in irons without the least tumult.

The day after, they were put to the torture of burning matches ; which, tho' several times repeated, could not bring them to make any confession. In the mean time I learnt, that *Samba* had, in his own country, been at the head of the revolt, by which the *French* lost Fort *Arguin* ; and when it was recovered again by M. *Perier de Salvart*, one of the principal articles of the peace was, that this *Negro* should be condemned to slavery in *America* : That *Samba*, on his passage, had laid a scheme to murder the crew, in order to become master of the ship ; but that being discovered, he was put in irons, in which he continued, till he landed in *Louisiana*.

I drew

I drew up a memorial of all this ; which was read before *Samba* by the Judge Criminal ; who, threatening him again with the torture, told him, he had ever been a seditious fellow : Upon which *Samba* directly owned all the circumstances of the conspiracy ; and the rest, being confronted with him, confessed also : After which, the eight *Negroes* were condemned to be broke alive on the wheel, and the woman to be hanged before their eyes ; which was accordingly done, and prevented the conspiracy from taking effect.

## C H A P. XII.

*The War of the Natchez. Massacre of the French in 1729. Extirpation of the Natchez in 1730.*

**I**N the beginning of the month of *December* 1729, we heard at *New Orleans*, with the most affecting grief, of the massacre of the *French* at the Post of the *Natchez*, occasioned by the imprudent conduct of the Commandant. I shall trace that whole affair from its first rise.

The *Sieur de Chopart* had been Commandant of the Post of the *Natchez*, from which he was removed on account of some acts of injustice. *M. Perier*, Commandant General, but lately arrived, suffered himself to be prepossessed in his favour, on his telling him, that he had commanded that Post with applause: And thus he obtained the command from *M. Perier*, who was unacquainted with his character.

This new Commandant, on taking possession of his Post, projected the forming one of the most eminent settlements of the whole Colony.

Colony. For this purpose he examined all the grounds, unoccupied by the *French*: But could not find any thing that came up to the grandeur of his views. Nothing but the village of the *White Apple*, a square league at least in extent, could give him satisfaction; where he immediately resolved to settle. This ground was distant from the Fort about two leagues. Conceited with the beauty of his project, the Commandant sent for the *Sun* of that village to come to the Fort.

The Commandant, upon his arrival at the Fort, told him, without further ceremony, that he must look out for another ground to build his village on, as he himself resolved, as soon as possible, to build on the village of the *Apple*; that he must directly clear the huts, and retire somewhere else. The better to cover his design, he gave out, that it was necessary for the *French* to settle on the banks of the rivulet, where stood the Great Village, and the abode of the *Grand Sun*. The Commandant, doubtless, supposed that he was speaking to a slave, whom we may command in a tone of absolute authority. But he knew not, that the natives of *Louisiana* are such enemies to a state of slavery, that they prefer death itself thereto; above all, the *Suns*, accustomed



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customed to govern despotically, have still a greater aversion to it.

The *Sun* of the *Apple* thought, that if he was talked to in a reasonable manner, he might listen to him : In this he had been right, had he to deal with a reasonable person. He therefore made answer, that his ancestors had lived in that village for as many years as there were hairs in his double cue, and therefore it was good, that they should continue there still.

Scarce had the interpreter explained this answer to the Commandant, but he fell into a passion, and threatned the *Sun*, if he did not quit his village in a few days, he might repent it. The *Sun* replied ; when the *French* came to ask us for lands to settle on, they told us, there was land enough still unoccupied, which they might take ; the same sun would enlighten them all, and all would walk in the same path. He wanted to proceed farther in justification of what he alleged ; but the Commandant, who was in a passion, told him, he was resolved to be obeyed, without any further reply. The *Sun*, without discovering any emotion or passion, withdrew, only saying, he was going to assemble the old

old men of his village, to hold a Council on this affair.

He actually assembled them : And in this Council it was resolved to represent to the Commandant, that the corn of all the people of their village was already shôt a little out of the earth, and that all the hens were laying their eggs ; that if they quitted their village at present, the chickens and corn would be lost both to the *French* and to themselves ; as the *French* were not numerous enough to weed all the corn, they had sown in their fields.

This resolution taken, they sent to propose it to the Commandant, who rejected it with a menace to chastise them, if they did not obey in a very short time, which he prefixed.

The *Sun* reported this answer to his Council, who debated the question, which was knotty. But the policy of the old men was, that they should propose to the Commandant, to be allowed to stay in their village till harvest, and till they had time to dry their corn, and shake out the grain ; on condition each hut of the village should pay him in so many Moons (months,) which they agreed on, a basket of corn and a fowl ; that this Com-  
mandant

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mandant appeared to be a man highly self-interested, and that this proposition would be a means of gaining time, till they should take proper measures to withdraw themselves from the tyranny of the *French*.

The *Sun* returned to the Commandant, and proposed to pay him the tribute I just mentioned, if he waited till the first colds, (winter;) that then the corn would be gathered in, and dry enough to shake out the grain; that thus, they would not be exposed to lose their corn, and die of hunger: That the Commandant himself would find his account in it, and that as soon as any corn was shaken out, they should bring him some.

The avidity of the Commandant made him accept the proposition with joy, and blinded him with regard to the consequences of his tyranny. He, however, pretended, that he agreed to the offer out of favour, to do a pleasure to a nation so beloved, and who had ever been good friends of the *French*. The *Sun* appeared highly satisfied to have obtained a delay, sufficient for taking the precautions, necessary to the security of the nation; for, he was by no means the dupe of the feigned benevolence of the Commandant.

The

The *Sun*, upon his return, caused the Council to be assembled; told the old men, that the *French* Commandant had acquiesced in the offers which he had made him, and granted the term of time they demanded. He then laid before them, that it was necessary, wisely to avail themselves of this time, in order to withdraw themselves from the proposed payment and tyrannic domination of the *French*, who grew dangerous in proportion as they multiplied. That the *Natchez* ought to remember the war, made upon them, in violation of the Peace concluded between them: That this war having been made upon their village alone, they ought to consider of the surest means to take a just and a bloody vengeance: That this enterprize being of the utmost consequence, it called for much secrecy, for solid measures, and for much policy: That thus it was proper to cajole the *French* Chief more than ever: That this affair required some days to reflect on, before they came to a resolution therein, and before it should be proposed to the *Grand Sun* and his Council: That at present they had only to retire; and in a few days he would assemble them again, that they might then determine the part they were to act.

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In five or six days he brought together the old men, who in that interval were consulting with each other : which was the reason, that all the suffrages were unanimous in the same and only means of obtaining the end, they proposed to themselves, which was the entire destruction of the *French* in this province.

The *Sun*, seeing them all assembled, said :  
 “ You have had time to reflect on the proposition I made you : and so I imagine, you  
 “ will soon set forth the best means, how  
 “ to get rid of your bad neighbours without hazard.” The *Sun* having done speaking, the oldest rose up, saluted his Chief after his manner, and said to him :

“ We have a long time been sensible, that  
 “ the neighbourhood of the *French* is a greater  
 “ prejudice than benefit to us : we, who are  
 “ old men, see this ; the young see it not.  
 “ The wares of the *French* yield pleasure to  
 “ the youth ; but in effect to what purpose is  
 “ all this, but to debauch the young women,  
 “ and taint the blood of the nation, and make  
 “ them vain and idle ? The young men are in  
 “ the same case ; and the married must work  
 “ themselves to death to maintain their families,  
 “ and please their children. Before the  
 “ *French*

“ *French* came amongst us, we were men, con-  
 “ tent with what we had, and that was suffici-  
 “ ent : we walked with boldness every road,  
 “ because we were then our own masters: but  
 “ now we go groping, afraid of meeting  
 “ thorns, we walk like slaves, which we shall  
 “ soon be, since the *French* already treat us as  
 “ if we were such. When they are sufficiently  
 “ strong, they will no longer dissemble.. For  
 “ the least fault of our young people, they will  
 “ tie them to a post, and whip them, as they  
 “ do their black slaves. Have they not already  
 “ done so to one of our young men; and is  
 “ not death preferable to slavery ?”

Here he paused a while, and after taking breath, proceeded thus :

“ What wait we for ? Shall we suffer the  
 “ *French* to multiply, till we are no longer in  
 “ a condition to oppose their efforts ? What  
 “ will the other nations say of us, who pass  
 “ for the most ingenious of all the *Red-men* ?  
 “ They will then say, we have less under-  
 “ standing than other people. Why then  
 “ wait we any longer ? Let us set ourselves  
 “ at liberty, and show we are really men, who  
 “ can be satisfied with what we have. From  
 “ this very day let us begin to set about it,  
 “ order our women to get provisions ready,  
 “ without

“ without telling them the reason ; go and  
“ carry the Pipe of Peace to all the nations  
“ of this country ; make them sensible, that  
“ the *French*, being stronger in our neighbour-  
“ hood than elsewhere, make us, more than  
“ others, feel, that they want to enslave us ;  
“ and when become sufficiently strong, will,  
“ in like manner, treat all the nations of the  
“ country ; that it is their interest to prevent  
“ so great a misfortune ; and for this purpose  
“ they have only to join us, and cut off  
“ the *French* to a man, in one day and one  
“ hour ; and the time to be that, on which  
“ the term prefixed and obtained of the  
“ *French* Commandant, to carry him the  
“ contribution agreed on, is expired ; the  
“ hour to be the quarter of the day (nine in  
“ the morning ; ) and then several warriors to  
“ go and carry him the corn, as the beginning  
“ of their several payments, also carry with  
“ them their arms, as if going out to hunt :  
“ and that to every *Frenchman* in a *French*  
“ house, there shall be two or three *Natchez* ;  
“ to ask to borrow arms and ammunition,  
“ for a general hunting-match, on account  
“ of a great feast, and to promise to bring  
“ them meat ; the report of the firing at the  
“ Commandant’s, to be the signal to fall at  
“ once

“ once upon, and kill the *French* : That then  
 “ we shall be able to prevent those, who may  
 “ come from the old *French* village, (*New*  
*Orleans*) by the great water (*Mississipi*) ever  
 “ to settle here.”

He added, that after apprizing the other nations of the necessity of taking that violent step, a bundle of rods, in number equal to that they should reserve for themselves, should be left with each nation, expressive of the number of days that were to precede that on which they were to strike the blow at one and the same time. And to avoid mistakes, and to be exact in pulling out a rod every day, and breaking and throwing it away, it was necessary to give this in charge to a person of prudence. Here he ceased and sat down: They all approved his counsel, and were to a man of his mind.

The project was in like manner approved of by the *Sun* of the *Apple* : The business was to bring over the *Grand Sun*, with the other *Petty Suns*, to their opinion ; because all the Princes being agreed as to that point, the nation would all to a man implicitly obey. They however took the precaution to forbid apprizing the women thereof, not excepting the female *Suns*, (*Princesses*,) or giving them  
 the



the least suspicion of their designs against the *French*.

The *Sun* of the *Apple* was a man of good abilities ; by which means he easily brought over the *Grand Sun* to favour his scheme, he being a young man of no experience in the world ; and having no great correspondence with the *French* : He was the more easily gained over, as all the *Suns* were agreed, that the *Sun* of the *Apple* was a man of solidity and penetration ; who having repaired to the Sovereign of the nation, apprized him of the necessity of taking that step, as in time himself would be forced to quit his own village ; also of the wisdom of the measures concerted, such as even ascertained success ; and of the danger to which his youth was exposed, with neighbours so enterprising ; above all, with the present *French* Commandant, of whom the inhabitants, and even the soldiers complained : That as long as the *Grand Sun*, his father, and his uncle, the *Stung Serpent*, lived, the Commandant of the Fort durst never undertake any thing to their detriment ; because the Grand Chief of the *French*, who resides at their great village (*New Orleans*,) had a love for them : But that he, the *Grand Sun*, being unknown to the *French*, and but a youth,

would

would be despised. In fine, that the only means to preserve his authority, was to rid himself of the *French*, by the method; and with the precautions, projected by the old men.

The result of this conversation was, that on the day following, when the *Suns* should in the morning come to salute the *Grand Sun*, he was to order them to repair to the *Sun* of the *Apple*, without taking notice of it to any one. This was accordingly executed, and the seducing abilities of the *Sun* of the *Apple* drew all the *Suns* into his scheme. In consequence of which they formed a Council of *Suns* and aged Nobles, who all approved of the design: And then these aged Nobles were nominated Heads of Embassies to be sent to the several Nations; had a guard of Warriors to accompany them, and on pain of death, were discharged from mentioning it to any one whatever. This resolution taken, they set out severally at the same time, unknown to the *French*.

Notwithstanding the profound secrecy observed by the *Natchez*, the Council held by the *Suns* and aged Nobles gave the people uneasiness, unable as they were to penetrate into the matter. The female *Suns* (Princesses) had alone in this Nation a right to demand, why

they were kept in the dark in this affair. The young *Grand female Sun* was a Princess scarce eighteen : And none but the *Stung Arm*, a woman of great wit, and no less sensible of it, could be offended, that nothing was disclosed to her. In effect, she testified her displeasure at this reserve with respect to herself, to her son ; who replied, that the several Deputations were made, in order to renew their good intelligence with the other nations, to whom they had not of a long time sent an Embassy, and who might imagine themselves slighted by such a neglect. This feigned excuse seemed to appease the Princess, but not quite to rid her of all her uneasiness ; which, on the contrary, was heightened, when, on the return of the Embassies, she saw the *Suns* assemble in secret Council together with the Deputies, to learn what reception they met with ; whereas ordinarily they assembled in public.

At this the female *Sun* was filled with rage, which would have openly broke out, had not her prudence set bounds to it. Happy it was for the *French*, she imagined herself neglected : For I am persuaded the Colony owes its preservation to the vexation of this woman rather than to any remains of affection she entertained for the *French*, as she was now far advanced

vanced in years, and her gallant dead some time.

In order to get to the bottom of the secret, she prevailed on her son to accompany her on a visit to a relation, that lay sick at the village of the *Meal*; and leading him the longest way about, and most retired, took occasion to reproach him with the secrecy he and the other *Suns* observed with regard to her, insisting with him on her right as a mother, and her privilege as a Princess: Adding, that tho' all the world, and herself too, had told him he was the son of a *Frenchman*, yet her own blood was much dearer to her than that of strangers; that he needed not apprehend she would ever betray him to the *French*, against whom, said she, you are plotting.

Her son, stung with these reproaches, told her, it was unusual to reveal what the old men of the Council had once resolved upon; alledging, he himself, as being *Grand Sun*, ought to set a good example in this respect: That the affair was concealed from the Princess his consort as well as from her; and that tho' he was the son of a *Frenchman*, this gave no mistrust of him to the other *Suns*. But seeing, says he, you have guessed the whole

affair, I need not inform you farther ; you know as much as I do myself, only hold your tongue.

She was in no pain, she replied, to know against whom he had taken his precautions : But as it was against the *French*, this was the very thing that made her apprehensive he had not taken his measures aright in order to surprize them ; as they were a people of great penetration, tho' their Commandant had none : That they were brave, and could bring over by their presents, all the Warriors of the other nations ; and had resources, which the *Red-men* were without.

Her son told her, she had nothing to apprehend as to the measures taken : That all the Nations had heard and approved their project, and promised to fall upon the *French* in their neighbourhood, on the same day with the *Natchez* : That the *Chactaws* took upon them to destroy all the *French* lower down and along the *Mississipi*, up as far as the *Tonicas* ; to which last people, he said, we did not send, as they and the *Oumas* are too much wedded, to the *French* ; and that it was better to involve both these nations in the same general destruction with the *French*. He at last told her,

her, the bundle of rods lay in the temple, on the flat timber.

The *Stung Arm* being informed of the whole design, pretended to approve of it, and leaving her son at ease, henceforward was only solicitous how she might defeat this barbarous design: The time was pressing, and the term prefixed for the execution was almost expired.

This woman, unable to bear to see the *French* cut off to a man in one day by the conspiracy of the natives, sought how to save the greatest part of them: For this purpose she bethought herself of acquainting some young women therewith, who loved the *French*, enjoining them never to tell, from whom they had their information.

She herself desired a soldier she met, to go and tell the Commandant, that the *Natchez* had lost their senses, and to desire him to be upon his guard: That he need only make the smallest repairs possible on the Fort, in presence of some of them, in order to shew his mistrust; when all their resolutions and bad designs would vanish and fall to the ground.

The soldier faithfully performed his commission: But the Commandant, far from giving credit to the information, or availing

himself thereof; or diving into, and informing himself of the grounds of it, treated the soldier as a coward and a visionary, caused him to be clapt in irons, and said, he would never take any step towards repairing the Fort, or putting himself on his guard, as the *Natchez* would then imagine, he was a man of no resolution, and was struck with a mere panick.

The *Stung Arm* fearing a discovery, notwithstanding her utmost precaution, and the secrecy she enjoined, repaired to the temple, and pulled some rods out of the fatal bundle: Her design was to hasten, or forward the term prefixed, to the end, that such *Frenchmen*, as escaped the massacre, might apprize their countrymen, many of whom had informed the Commandant; who clapt seven of them in irons, treating them as cowards on that account.

The female *Sun*, seeing the term approaching, and many of those punished, whom she had charged to acquaint the Governor, resolved to speak to the Under-Lieutenant; but to no better purpose, the Commandant paying no greater regard to him than to the common soldiers.

Notwith-



Notwithstanding all these informations, the Commandant went out the night before on a party of pleasure, with some other *Frenchmen*, to the Grand Village of the *Natchez*, without returning to the Fort till break of day ; where he was no sooner come, but he had pressing advice to be upon his guard.

The Commandant, still flustered with his last night's debauch, added imprudence to his neglect of these last advices ; and ordered his Interpreter instantly to repair to the Grand Village, and demand of the *Grand Sun*, whether he intended, at the head of his Warriors, to come and kill the *French*, and to bring him word directly. The *Grand Sun*, tho' but a young man, knew how to dissemble, and spoke in such a manner to the Interpreter, as to give full satisfaction to the Commandant, who valued himself on his contempt of former advices : He then repaired to his house, situate below the Fort.

The *Natchez* had too well taken their measures, to be disappointed in the success thereof. The fatal moment was at last come. The *Natchez* set out on the Eve of St. Andrew, 1729, taking care to bring with them one of the lower fort, armed with a wooden



hatchet, in order to knock down the Commandant\*: They had so high a contempt for him, that no Warrior would deign to kill him. The houses of the *French* filled with enemies, the Fort in like manner with the natives, who entered in at the gate and breaches, deprived the soldiers, without officers, or even a serjeant at their head, of the means of self-defence. In the mean time the *Grand Sun* arrived, with some Warriors loaded with corn, in appearance as the first payment of the contribution; when several shot were fired. As this firing was the signal, several shot were heard at the same instant. Then at length the Commandant saw, but too late, his folly: He ran into his garden, whither he was pursued and killed. This massacre was executed every where at the same time. Of about seven hundred persons, but few escaped to carry the dreadful news to the Capital; on receiving which the Governor and Council were sensibly affected, and orders were dispatched every where to put people on their guard.

The other *Indians* were displeased at the conduct of the *Natchez*, imagining they had

\* Others say he was shot: But neither account can be ascertained, as no *Frenchman* present escaped.

forwarded

forwarded the term agreed on, in order to make them ridiculous, and proposed to take vengeance the first opportunity, not knowing the true cause of the precipitation of the *Natchez*.

After they had cleared the fort, warehouse, and other houses, the *Natchez* set them all on fire, not leaving a single building standing.

The *Yazous*, who happened to be at that very time on an Embassy to the *Natchez*, were prevailed on to destroy the Post of the *Yazous*; which they failed not to effect some days after, making themselves masters of the Fort, under colour of paying a visit, as usual, and knocking all the garrison on the head.

M. *Perier*, Governor of *Louisiana*, was then taking the proper steps to be avenged: He sent M. *le Sueur* to the *Chactaws*, to engage them on our side against the *Natchez*; in which he succeeded without any difficulty. The reason of their readiness to enter into this design was not then understood, it being unknown that they were concerned in the plot of the *Natchez* to destroy all the *French*, and that it was only to be avenged of the *Natchez*, who had taken the start of

H 5                      them,

them, and not given them a sufficient share of the booty.

M. de Loubois, King's Lieutenant, was nominated to be at the head of this expedition : He went up the river with a small army, and arrived at the *Tonicas*. The *Chactaws* at length arrived in the month of *February* near the *Natchez*, to the number of fifteen or sixteen hundred men, with M. le *Sueur* at their head ; whither M. de Loubois came the *March* following.

The army encamped near the ruins of the old *French* settlement ; and after resting five days there, they marched to the enemy's Fort, which was a league from thence.

After opening the trenches and firing for several days upon the fort without any great effect, the *French* at last made their approach so near as to frighten the enemy, who sent to offer to release all the *French* women and children, on the condition of obtaining a lasting peace, and of being suffered to live peaceably on their ground, without being driven from thence, or molested for the future.

M. de

M. de Loubois assured them of peace on their own terms, if they also gave up the *French*, who were in the fort, and all the *Negroes* they had taken belonging to the *French*; and if they agreed to destroy the fort by fire. The *Grand Sun* accepted these conditions, provided the *French* General should promise, he would neither enter the fort with the *French*, nor suffer their auxiliaries to enter; which was accepted by the General; who sent the allies to receive all the slaves.

The *Natchez*, highly pleased to have gained time, availed themselves of the following night, and went out of the fort, with their wives and children, loaded with their baggage and the *French* plunder, leaving nothing but the cannon and ball behind.

M. de Loubois was struck with amazement at this escape, and only thought of retreating to the landing-place, in order to build a fort there: But first it was necessary to recover the *French* out of the hands of the *Chaftaws*, who insisted on a very high ransom. The matter was compromised by means of the Grand Chief of the *Tonicas*, who prevailed on them to accept what M. de Loubois was constrained to offer them, to

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satisfy their avarice ; which they accordingly accepted, and gave up the *French* slaves, on promise of being paid as soon as possible : But they kept as security a young *Frenchman* and some *Negro* slaves, whom they would never part with, till payment was made.

M. de *Loubois* gave orders to build a terrace-fort, far preferable to a stoccado ; there he left M. *du Crenet*, with an hundred and twenty men in garrison, with cannon and ammunition ; after which he went down the *Mississipi* to *New Orleans*. The *Chaftaws*, *Tonicas*, and other allies, returned home.

After the *Natchez* had abandoned the fort, it was demolished, and its piles, or stakes, burnt. As the *Natchez* dreaded both the vengeance of the *French*, and the insolence of the *Chaftaws*, that made them take the resolution of escaping in the night.

A short time after, a considerable party of the *Natchez* carried the Pipe of Peace to the Grand Chief of the *Tonicas*, under pretence of concluding a peace with him and all the *French*. The Chief sent to M. *Perier* to know his pleasure : but the *Natchez* in the mean time assassinated the *Tonicas*, beginning with  
their

their Grand Chief; and few of them escaped this treachery.

M. Perier, Commandant General, zealous for the service, neglected no means, whereby to discover in what part the *Natchez* had taken refuge. And after many enquiries, he was told, they had entirely quitted the East side of the *Mississipi*, doubtless to avoid the troublesome and dangerous visits of the *Chactaws*; and in order to be more concealed from the *French*, had retired to the West of the *Mississipi*, near the *Silver Creek*, about sixty leagues from the mouth of the *Red River*.

These advices were certain: But the Commandant General not thinking himself in a condition fit to attack them without succours, had applied for that purpose to the Court; and succours were accordingly sent him.

In the mean time the Company, who had been apprized of the misfortune at the Post of the *Natchez*, and the losses they had sustained by the war, gave up that Colony to the King, with the privileges annexed thereto. The Company at the same time ceded to the King all that belonged to them in that

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that Colony, as fortresses, artillery, ammunition, warehouses, and plantations, with the *Negroes* belonging thereto. In consequence of which, his Majesty sent one of his ships, commanded by M. *de Forant*, who brought with him M. *de Salmont*, Commissary-General of the Marine, and Inspector of *Louisiana*, in order to take possession of that Colony in the King's name.

I was continued in the inspection of this plantation, now become the King's in 1730, as before.

M. *Perier*, who till then had been Commandant General of *Louisiana* for the *West-India* Company, was now made Governor for the King; and had the satisfaction to see his brother arrive, in one of the King's ships, commanded by M. *Perier de Salvart*, with the succours he demanded, which were an hundred and fifty soldiers of the marine. This Officer had the title of Lieutenant General of the Colony conferred upon him.

The Messrs *Perier* set out with their army, in very favourable weather; and arrived at last, without obstruction, near to the retreat of the *Natchez*. To get to that place, they went up the *Red River*, then the *Black River*,

*River*, and from thence up the *Silver Creek*, which communicates with a small Lake at no great distance from the fort, which the *Natchez* had built, in order to maintain their ground against the *French*.

The *Natchez*, struck with terror at the sight of a vigilant enemy, shut themselves up in their fort. Despair assumed the place of prudence, and they were at their wits end, on seeing the trenches gain ground on the fort: They equip themselves like Warriors, and stain their bodies with different colours, in order to make their last efforts by a sally, which resembled a transport of rage more than the calmness of valour, to the terror, at first, of the soldiers.

The reception they met from our men, taught them, however, to keep themselves shut up in their fort; and tho' the trench was almost finished, our Generals were impatient to have the mortars put in a condition to play on the place. At last they are set in battery; when the third bomb happened to fall in the middle of the fort, the usual place of residence of the women and children, they set up a horrible screaming; and the men, seized with grief at the cries  
of



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of their wives and children, made the signal to capitulate.

The *Natchez*, after demanding to capitulate, started difficulties, which occasioned messages to and fro till night, which they waited to avail themselves of, demanding till next day to settle the articles of capitulation. The night was granted them, but being narrowly watched on the side next the gate, they could not execute the same project of escape, as in the war with *M. de Loubois*. However, they attempted it, by taking advantage of the obscurity of the night, and of the apparent stillness of the *French*: But they were discovered in time, the greatest part being constrained to retire into the fort. Some of them only happened to escape, who joined those that were out a hunting, and all together retired to the *Chicasaws*. The rest surrendered at discretion, among whom was the *Grand Sun*, and the female *Suns*, with several Warriors, many women, young people, and children.

The *French* army re-embarked, and carried the *Natchez* as slaves to *New Orleans*, where they were put in prison; but afterwards, to avoid an infection, the women and children were

were disposed of in the King's plantation, and elsewhere ; among these women was the female *Sun*, called the *Stung-Arm*, who then told me all she had done, in order to save the *French*.

Some time after, these slaves were embarked for *St. Domingo*, in order to root out that nation in the Colony ; which was the only method of effecting it, as the few that escaped had not a tenth of the women necessary to recruit the nation. And thus that nation, the most conspicuous in the Colony, and most useful to the *French*, was destroyed.

## C H A P. XIII.

*The War with the Chicafaws. The first Expedition by the river Mobile. The second by the Missisipi. The War with the Chaftaws terminated by the prudence of M. de Vaudreuil.*

THE War with the *Chicafaws* was owing to their having received and adopted the *Natchez* : Tho' in this respect they acted only according to an inviolable usage and sacred custom, established among all the nations of *North America* ; that when a nation, weakened by war, retires for shelter to another, who are willing to adopt them, and is pursued thither by their enemies, this is in effect to declare war against the nation adopting.

But M. de Biainville, whether displeased with this act of hospitality, or losing sight of this unalterable law, constantly prevailing among those nations, sent word to the *Chicafaws*, to give up the *Natchez*. In answer to his demand they alledged, that the *Natchez* having demanded to be incorporated with them, were accordingly received and adopted ;

adopted ; so as now to constitute but one nation, or people, under the name of *Chicasaws*, that of *Natchez* being entirely abolished. Besides, added they, had *Biainville* received our enemies, should we go to demand them? or, if we did, would they be given up?

Notwithstanding this answer, M. de *Biainville* made warlike preparations against the *Chicasaws*, sent off Captain *le Blanc*, with six armed boats under his command; one laden with gun-powder, the rest with goods, the whole allotted for the war against the *Chicasaws*; the Captain at the same time carrying orders to M. d' *Artaguette*, Commandant of the Post of the *Illinois*, to prepare to set out at the head of all the troops, inhabitants and *Indians*, he could march from the *Illinois*, in order to be at the *Chicasaws* the 10th of *May* following, as the Governor himself was to be there at the same time.

The *Chicasaws*, apprized of the warlike preparations of the *French*, resolved to guard the *Mississipi*, imagining they would be attacked on that side. In vain they attempted to surprize M. *le Blanc*'s convoy, which got  
safe

safe to the *Arkansas*, where the gun-powder was left, for reasons no one can surmise.

From thence he had no cross accident to the *Illinois*, at which place he delivered the orders the Governor had dispatched for M. *d'Artaguet*; who finding a boat laden with gun-powder, designed for his Post, and for the service of the war intended against the *Chicasaws*, left at the *Arkansas*, sent off the same day a boat to fetch it up; which on its return was attacked and taken by a party of *Chicasaws*; who killed all but M. *du Tifsenet*, junior, and one *Rosalie*, whom they made slaves.

In the mean time, M. *de Biainville* went by sea to Fort *Mobile*, where the Grand Chief of the *Chaftaws* waited for him, in consequence of his engaging to join his Warriors with ours, in order to make war upon the *Chicasaws*, in consideration of a certain quantity of goods, part to be paid down directly, the rest at a certain time prefixed. The Governor, after this, returned to *New Orleans*, there to wait the opening of the campaign.

M. *de Biainville*, on his return, made preparations against his own departure, and that  
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of the army, consisting of regular troops, some inhabitants and free *Negroes*, and some slaves, all which set out from *New Orleans* for *Mobile*; where, on the 10th of *March*, 1736, the army, together with the *Chactaws*, was assembled; and where they rested till the 2d of *April*, when they began their march; those from *New Orleans* taking their route by the river *Mobile*, in thirty large boats and as many pettyaugers; the *Indians* by land, marching along the east bank of that river; and making but short marches, they arrived at *Tombebec* only the 20th of *April*, where M. de *Blainville* caused a fort to be built: Here he gave the *Chactaws* the rest of the goods due to them, and did not set out from thence till the 4th of *May*. All this time was taken up with a Council of War, held on four soldiers, *French* and *Swiss*, who had laid a scheme to kill the Commandant and garrison, to carry off M. du *Tiffenet* and *Rosalie*, who had happily made their escape from the *Chicasaws*, and taken refuge in the fort, and to put them again into the hands of the enemy, in order to be better received by them; and to assist, and shew them how to make a proper defence against the *French*, and from thence to go over to the *English* of *Carolina*.

From

From the 4th of *May*, on which the army set out from *Tombebec*, they took twenty days to come to the landing-place. After landing, they built a very extensive inclosure of palisadoes, with a shed, as a cover for the goods and ammunition: Then the army passed the night. On the 25th powder and ball were given out to the soldiers, and inhabitants, the sick with some raw soldiers being left to guard this old sort of fort.

From this place to the fort of the *Chicasaws* are seven leagues: This day they marched five leagues and a half in two columns and in file, across woods. On the wings marched the *Chactaws*, to the number of twelve hundred at least, commanded by their Grand Chief. In the evening they encamped in a meadow, surrounded with wood.

On the 26th of *May* they marched to the enemy's fort, across thin woods; and with water up to the waist, passed over a rivulet, which traverses a small wood; on coming out of which, they entered a fine plain: In this plain stood the fort of the *Chicasaws*, with a village defended by it. This fort is situated on an eminence, with an easy ascent; around

around it stood several huts, and at a greater distance towards the bottom, other huts, which appeared to have been put in a state of defence: Quite close to the fort ran a little brook, which watered a part of the plain.

The *Chactaws* no sooner espied the enemy's fort, than they rent the air with their Death-cries, and instantly flew to the fort: But their ardour flagged at a carabin-shot from the place. The *French* marched in good order, and got beyond a small wood, which they left in their rear, within cannon-shot of the enemy's fort, where an *English* flag was seen flying. At the same time four *Englishmen*, coming from the huts, were seen to go up the ascent, and enter the fort, where their flag was set up.

Upon this, it was imagined, they would be summoned to quit the enemy's fort, and to surrender, as would in like manner the *Chicasaws*: But nothing of this was once proposed. The General gave orders to the Majors to form large detachments of each of their corps, in order to go and take the enemy's fort. These orders were in part executed: Three large detachments were made; namely, one of grenadiers, one  
of



of soldiers, and another of militia, or train-bands; who, to the number of twelve hundred men advanced with ardour towards the enemy's fort, crying out aloud several times, *Vive le Roi*, as if already masters of the place; which, doubtless, they imagined to carry sword in hand; for in the whole army there was not a single iron tool to remove the earth, and form the attacks.

The rest of the army marched in battle-array, ten men deep; mounted the eminence whereon the fort stood, and, being come there, set fire to some huts, with wild-fire thrown at the ends of darts; but the smoke stifled the army.

The regular troops marched in front, and the militia, or train-bands, in rear, according to rule. These train-bands made a quarter turn to right and left, with the intent to go and invest the place. But *M. de Fusan*, Aid-major of the troops, stopt short their ardor, and sent them to their proper post, reserving for his own corps the glory of carrying the place, which continued to make a brisk defence. *Biainville* remained at the quarters of reserve; where he observed what would be the issue of the attack, than which none could be more disadvantageous.

Both

Both the regulars and inhabitants, or train-bands gave instances of the greatest valour: But what could they do, open and exposed as they were, against a fort, whose stakes or wooden posts were a fathom in compass, and their joinings again lined with other posts, almost as big? From this fort, which was well garrisoned, issued a shower of balls; which would have mowed down at least half the assailants, if directed by men, who knew how to fire. The enemy were under cover from all the attacks of the *French*, and could have defended themselves by their loop-holes. Besides, they formed a gallery of flat pallisades quite round, covered with earth, which screened it from the effects of grenadoes. In this manner the troops lavished their ammunition against the wooden posts, or stakes, of the enemy's fort, without any other effect, than having thirty-two men killed, and almost seventy wounded; which last were carried to the body of reserve; from whence the General, seeing the bad success of the attack, ordered to beat the retreat, and sent a large detachment to favour it. It was now five in the evening, and the attack had been begun at half an hour after one. The troops rejoined the body of the army, without being able to carry off

their dead, which were left on the field of battle, exposed to the rage of the enemy.

After taking some refreshment, they directly fortified themselves, by felling trees, in order to pass the night secure from the insults of the enemy, by being carefully on their guard. Next day it was observed, the enemy had availed themselves of that night to demolish some huts, where the *French*, during the attack, had put themselves under cover, in order from thence to batter the fort.

On the 27th, the day after the attack, the army began its march, and lay at a league from the enemy. The day following, at a league from the landing-place, whither they arrived next day. The *French* embarked for Fort *Mobile*, and from thence for the Capital, from which each returned to his own home.

A little time after, a serjeant of the garrison of the *Illinois* arrived at *New Orleans*, who reported, that, in consequence of the General's orders, M. *d'Artaguet* had taken his measures so well, that on the 9th of *May* he arrived with his men near the *Chicafaws*, sent out scouts to discover the arrival of the  
*French*

*French* army ; which he continued to do till the 20th : That the *Indians* in alliance hearing no accounts of the *French*, wanted either to return home, or to attack the *Chicasaws* ; which last M. d'Artaquette resolved upon, on the 21st, with pretty good success at first, having forced the enemy to quit their village and fort : That he then attacked another village with the same success ; but that pursuing the runaways, M. d'Artaquette had received two wounds, which the *Indians* finding, resolved to abandon that Commandant, with forty-six soldiers and two serjeants, who defended their Commandant all that day, but were at last obliged to surrender ; that they were well used by the enemy, who understanding that the *French* were in their country, prevailed on M. d'Artaquette to write to the General ; but that this deputation having had no success, and learning that the *French* were retired, and despairing of any ransom for their slaves, put them to death by a slow fire. The serjeant added, he had the happiness to fall into the hands of a good master, who favoured his escape to *Mobile*.

M. de Biainville, desirous to take vengeance of the *Chicasaws*, wrote to *France* for  
I 2                      succours,

succours, which the Court sent, ordering also the Colony of *Canada* to send succours. In the mean time *M. de Biainville* sent off a large detachment for the river *St. Francis*, in order to build a fort there, called also *St. Francis*.

The squadron, which brought the succours from *France* being arrived, they set out, by going up the *Mississipi*, for the fort that had been just built. This army consisted of *Marines*, of the troops of the Colony, of several *Inhabitants*, many *Negroes*, and some *Indians*, our allies; and being assembled in this place, took water again, and still proceeded up the *Mississipi* to a little river called *Margot*, near the Cliffs called *Prud'homme*, and there the whole army landed. They encamped on a fine plain, at the foot of a hill, about fifteen leagues from the enemy; fortified themselves by way of precaution, and built in the fort a house for the Commandant, some cazerns, and a warehouse for the goods. This fort was called *Assumption*, from the day on which they landed.

They had waggons and sledges made, and the roads cleared for transporting cannon, ammunition, and other necessaries for forming

ing a regular siege. There and then it was the succours from *Canada* arrived, consisting of *French, Iroquois, Hurons, Episingles, Algonquins*, and other nations: And soon after arrived the new Commandant of the *Illinois*, with the garrison, inhabitants, and neighbouring *Indians*, all that he could bring together, with a great number of horses.

This formidable army, consisting of so many different nations, the greatest ever seen, and perhaps that ever will be seen, in those parts, remained in this camp without undertaking any thing, from the month of *August* 1739, to the *March* following. Provisions, which at first were in great plenty, came at last to be so scarce, that they were obliged to eat the horses which were to draw the artillery, ammunition, and provisions: Afterwards sickness raged in the army. *M. de Biainville*, who hitherto had attempted nothing against the *Chicasaws*, resolved to have recourse to mild methods. He therefore detached, about the 15th of *March*, the company of Cadets, with their Captain, *M. de Celoron*, their Lieutenant, *M. de St. Laurent*, and the *Indians*, who came with them from *Canada*, against the *Chicasaws*, with orders to offer peace to them in his name, if they sued for it.

What the General had foreseen, failed not to happen. As soon as the *Chicasaws* saw the *French*, followed by the *Indians* of *Canada*, they doubted not in the least, but the rest of that numerous army would soon follow: And they no sooner saw them approach, but they made signals of peace, and came out of their fort in the most humble manner, exposing themselves to all the consequences that might ensue, in order to obtain peace. They solemnly protested that they actually were, and would continue to be inviolable friends of the *French*; that it was the *English*, who prevailed upon them to act in this manner; but that they had fallen out with them on this account, and at that very time had two of that nation, whom they made slaves; and that the *French* might go and see whether they spoke truth.

M. de St. Laurent asked to go, and accordingly went with a young slave: But he might have had reason to have repented it, had not the men been more prudent than the women, who demanded the head of the *Frenchman*: But the men, after consulting together, were resolved to save him, in order to obtain peace of the *French*, on giving  
up



up the two *Englishmen*. The women risk scarce any thing near so much as the men ; these last are either slain in battle, or put to death by their enemies ; whereas the women at worst are but slaves ; and they all perfectly well know, that the *Indian* women are far better off when slaves to the *French*, than if married at home. M. de St. Laurent, highly pleased with this discovery, promised them peace in the name of M. de Biainville and of all the *French* : After these assurances, they went all in a body out of the fort, to present the Pipe to M. de Celoron, who accepted it, and repeated the same promise.

In a few days after, he set out with a great company of *Chicasaws*, deputed to carry the Pipe to the *French* General, and deliver up the two *Englishmen*. When they came before M. de Biainville, they fell prostrate at his feet, and made him the same protestations of fidelity and friendship, as they had already made to M. de Celoron ; threw the blame on the *English* ; said they were entirely fallen out with them, and had taken these two, and put them in his hands, as enemies. They protested, in the most solemn manner, they would for ever be friends



of the *French* and of their friends, and enemies of their enemies; in fine, that they would make war on the *English*, if it was thought proper, in order to shew, that they renounced them as traitors.

Thus ended the war with the *Chicasaws*, about the beginning of *April*, 1740. *M. de Biainville* dismissed the auxiliaries, after making them presents; razed the Fort *Assumption*, thought to be no longer necessary, and embarked with his whole army; and in passing down, caused the Fort *St. Francis* to be demolished, as it was now become useless; and he repaired to the Capital, after an absence of more than ten months.

Some years after, we had disputes with a part of the *Chattaws*, who followed the interests of the *Red-Shoe*, a Prince of that nation, who in the first expedition against the *Chicasaws*, had some disputes with the *French*. This *Indian*, more insolent than any one of his nation, took a pretext to break out, and commit several hostilities against the *French*. *M. de Vaudreuil*, then Governor of *Louisiana*, being apprized of this, and of the occasion thereof, strictly forbade the *French* to frequent that nation, and to truck

truck with them any arms or ammunition, in order to put a stop to that disorder in a short time, and without drawing the sword.

M. *de Vaudreuil*, after taking these precautions, sent to demand of the Grand Chief of the whole nation, whether, like the *Red-Shoe*, he was also displeased with the *French*. He made answer, he was their friend: But that the *Red-Shoe* was a young man, without understanding. Having returned this answer, they sent him a present: But he was greatly surprized to find neither arms, powder, nor ball in this present, at a time when they were friends as before. This manner of proceeding, joined to the prohibition made of trucking with them arms or ammunition, heightened their surprize, and put them on having an explication on this head with the Governor; who made answer, That neither arms nor ammunition would be trucked with them, as long as the *Red-Shoe* had no more understanding; that they would not fail, as being brethren, to share a good part of the ammunition and arms with the Warriors of the *Red-Shoe*. This answer put them on remonstrating to the Village that insulted us; told them, if they did not instantly make

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peace with the *French*, they would themselves make war upon them. This threatening declaration made them sue for peace with the *French*, who were not in a condition to maintain a war against a nation so numerous. And thus the prudent policy of *M. de Vaudrenil* put a stop to this war, without either expence, or the loss of a man.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIV.

*Reflections on what gives occasion to Wars in Louisiana. The means of avoiding Wars in that province, as also the manner of coming off with advantage and little expence in them.*

THE experience I have had in the art of war, from some campaigns I made in a regiment of Dragoons till the Peace of 1713, my application to the study of the wars of the *Greeks, Romans*, and other ancient people, and the wars I have seen carried on with the *Indians* of *Louisiana*, during the time I resided in that Province, gave me occasion to make several reflections on what could give rise to a war with the *Indians*, on the means of avoiding such a war, and on such methods as may be employed, in order either to make or maintain a war to advantage against them, when constrained thereto.

In the space of sixteen years that I resided in *Louisiana*, I remarked, that the wars, and even the bare disputes we have had with the *Indians* of this Colony, never had any other origin, but our too familiar intercourse with them.

In order to prove this, let us consider the evils produced by this familiarity. In the first place, it makes them gradually drop that respect, which they naturally entertain for our nation.

In the second place, the *French* traffickers, or traders, are generally young people without experience, who, in order to gain the good-will of these people, afford them lights, or instruction, prejudicial to our interest: These young merchants are not, it is true, sensible of these consequences: But again, these people never lose sight of what can be of any utility to them, and the detriment thence accruing is not less great, nor less real.

In the third place, this familiarity gives occasion to vices, whence dangerous distempers ensue, and corruption of blood, which is naturally highly pure in this Colony. These persons, who frequently resort to the *Indians*, imagined themselves authorized to give a loose to their vices, from the practice of these last, which is to give young women to their guests, upon their arrival; a practice that greatly injures their health, and proves a detriment to their merchandizing.

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In the fourth place, this resorting to the *Indians* puts these last under a constraint, as being fond of solitude ; and this constraint is still more heightened, if the *French* settlement is near them ; which procures them too frequent visits, that give them so much more uneasiness, as they care not on any account, that people should see or know any of their affairs. And what fatal examples have we not of the dangers the settlements, which are too near the *Indians*, incur. Let but the massacre of the *French* be recollected, and it will be evident, that this proximity is extremely detrimental to the *French*.

In the fifth and last place, commerce, which is the principal allurements that draws us to this new world, instead of flourishing, is, on the contrary, endangered by the too familiar resort to the *Indians* of *North America*. The proof of this is very simple.

All who resort to countries beyond sea, know by experience, that when there is but one ship in the harbour, the Captain sells his cargo at what price he pleases : And then we hear it said, such a ship gained two, three, and sometimes as high as four hundred per cent. Should another ship happen to arrive in that

that harbour, the profit abates, at least one half; but should three arrive, or even four successively, the goods then are, so to speak, thrown at the head of the buyer: So that in this case a merchant has often great difficulty to recover his very expences of fitting out. I should therefore be led to believe, that it would be for the interest of commerce, if the *Indians* were left to come to fetch what merchandize they wanted, who having none but us in their neighbourhood, would come for it, without the *French* running any risk in their commerce, much less in their lives.

For this purpose, let us suppose a nation of *Indians* on the banks of some river, or rivulet, which is always the case, as all men whatever have at all times occasion for water. This being supposed, I look out for a spot, proper to build a small terrace-fort on, with fraises or stakes, and pallisadoes. In this fort I would build two small places for lodgings, of no great height; one to lodge the officers, the other the soldiers: This fort to have an advanced work, a half-moon, or the like, according to the importance of the Post. The passage to be thro' this advanced work to the fort, and no *Indian* allowed to enter on any pretence whatever; not even to receive the

Pipe

Pipe of Peace there, but only in the advanced work ; the gate of the fort to be kept shut day and night against all but the *French*. At the gate of the advanced work a sentinel to be posted, and that gate to be opened and shut on each person appearing before it. By these precautions, we might be sure never to be surprized, either by avowed enemies, or by treachery. In the advanced work a small building to be made for the merchants, who should come thither to traffick, or truck, with the neighbouring *Indians* ; of which last only three or four to be admitted at a time, all to have the merchandize at the same price, and no one to be favoured above another. No soldier or inhabitant to go to the villages of the neighbouring *Indians*, under severe penalties. By this conduct disputes would be avoided, as they only arise from too great a familiarity with them. These forts to be never nearer the villages than five leagues, or more distant than seven or eight. The *Indians* would make nothing of such a jaunt, it would be only a walk for them, and their want of goods would easily draw them, and in a little time they would become habituated to it. The merchants to pay a salary to an Interpreter, who might be some orphan, brought up very young among these people.

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This fort, thus distant a short journey, might be built without obstruction, or giving any umbrage to the *Indians*; as they might be told, it was built, in order to be at hand to truck their furs, and at the same time to give them no manner of uneasiness. One advantage would be, besides that of commerce, which would be carried on there, that these forts would prevent the *English* from having any communication with the *Indians*, as these last would find a great facility for their truck, and in forts so near them, every thing they could want.

The examples of the surprize of the forts of the *Natchez*, the *Kazoux*, and the *Missouris*, shew but too plainly the fatal consequences of negligence in the service, and of a misplaced condescension in favour of the soldiers, by suffering them to build huts near the fort, and to lie in them. None should be allowed to lie out of the fort, not even the Officers. The Commandant of the *Natchez*, and the other Officers, and even the Serjeants, were killed in their houses without the fort. I should not be against the soldiers planting little fields of tobacco, potatoes, and other plants, too low to conceal a man: On the contrary, these employments would incline them to become settlers;

settlers ; but I would never allow them houses out of the fort. By this means a fort becomes impregnable against the most numerous nation ; because they never will attack, should they have never so much cause, as long as they see people are on their guard.

Should it be objected, that these forts would cost a great deal : I answer, that tho' there was to be a fort for each nation, which is not the case, it would not cost near so much, as from time to time it takes to support wars, which in this country are very expensive, on account of the long journeys, and of transporting all the implements of war, hitherto made use of. Besides, we have a great part of these forts already built, so that we only want the advanced works ; and two new forts more would suffice to compleat this design, and prevent the fraudulent commerce of the *English* traders,

As to the manner of carrying on the war in *Louisiana*, as was hitherto done, it is very expensive, highly fatiguing, and the risk always great ; because you must first transport the ammunition to the landing-place ; from thence travel for many leagues ; then drag the artillery along by main force, and carry the ammunition on men's shoulders, a thing that harrasses

harrasses and weakens the troops very much. Moreover, there is a great deal of risk in making war in this manner : You have the approaches of a fort to make, which cannot be done without loss of lives : And should you make a breach, how many brave men are lost, before you can force men, who fight like desperadoes, because they prefer death to slavery.

I say, *should you make a breach*, because in all the time I resided in this Province, I never saw nor heard, that the cannon, which were brought against the *Indian* forts, ever made a breach for a single man to pass : It is therefore quite useless to be at that expence, and to harass the troops, to bring artillery, which can be of no manner of service.

That cannon can make no breach in *Indian* forts may appear strange : But not more strange than true ; as will appear, if we consider, that the wooden posts, or stakes, which surround these forts, are too big for a bullet of the size of those used in these wars, to cut them down, tho' it were even to hit their middle. If the bullet gives more towards the edge of the tree, it glides off, and strikes the next to it ; should the ball hit exactly between two posts, it opens them, and meets the

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the post of the lining, which stops it short : Another ball may strike the same tree, at the other joining, then it closes the little aperture the other had made.

Were I to undertake such a war, I would bring only a few *Indian* allies ; I could easily manage them ; they would not stand me so much in presents, nor consume so much ammunition and provisions : A great saving this ; and bringing no cannon with me, I should also save expences. I would have none but portable arms ; and thus my troops would not be harrassed. The country every where furnishes wherewithal to make moveable intrenchments, and approaches, without opening ground : And I would flatter myself to carry the fort in two days time. There I stop : the reader has no need of this detail, nor I to make it publick.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XV.

*Pensacola taken by surprize by the French.  
Retaken by the Spaniards. Again re-  
taken by the French, and demolished.*

**B**EFORE I go any farther, I think it necessary to relate what happened with respect to the Fort of *Pensacola* in *Virginia*\*. This Fort belongs to the *Spaniards*, and serves for an *Entrepot*, or harbour, for the *Spanish* galleons to put in to, in their passage from *La Vera Cruz* to *Europe*.

Towards the beginning of the year 1719, the Commandant General having understood, by the last ships which arrived, that war was declared between *France* and *Spain*, resolved to take the Post of *Pensacola* from the *Spaniards*; which stands on the Continent, about fifteen leagues from *Isle Dauphine*, is defended by a staccado-fort, at the entrance of the Road: Over against it, stands a fortin, or small fort, on the west point of the *Isle St. Rose*; which, on that side, defends the entrance of the Road: This fort has only a guard-house to defend it.

\* The Author must mean *Carolina*.

The Commandant General, persuaded it would be impossible to besiege the place in form, wanted to take it by surprize, confiding in the ardor of the *French*, and security of the *Spaniards*, who were as yet ignorant of our being at war with them in *Europe*. With that view, he assembled the few troops he had, with several *Canadian* and *French* Planters, newly arrived, who went as volunteers. - M. *de Chateauguiere*, the Commandant's brother, and King's Lieutenant, commanded under him; and next him, M. *de Richebourg*, Captain. After arming this body of men, and getting the necessary supplies of ammunition and provisions, he embarked with his small army, and by the favour of a prosperous wind, arrived in a short time at his place of destination. The *French* anchored near the fortin, made their descent undiscovered, seized on the guard-house, and clapt the soldiers in irons; which was done in less than half an hour. Some *French* soldiers were ordered to put on the cloaths of the *Spaniards*, in order to facilitate the surprizing the enemy. The thing succeeded to their wish. On the morrow, at day-break, they perceived the boat, which carried the detachment from *Pensacola*, in order to relieve the guard of the fortin; on which the *Spanish* march was caused to be beat up; and the

the *French* in disguise receiving them, and clapping them in irons, put on their cloaths ; and stepping into the same boat, surprized the sentinel, the guard-house, and at last the gar-rison, to the very Governor himself, who was taken in bed ; so that they all were made prisoners without any blood-shed.

The Commandant General, apprehensive of the scarcity of provisions, shipped off the prisoners, escorted by some soldiers, commanded by M. *de Richebourg*, in order to land them at the *Havanna* : He left his brother at *Pensacola*, to command there, with a garri-  
of sixty men. As soon as the *French* vessel had anchored at the *Havanna*, M. *de Richebourg* went on shore, to acquaint the *Spanish* Governor with his commission ; who received him with politeness, and as a testimony of his gratitude, made him and his officers prisoners, put the soldiers in irons and in prison, where they lay for some time, exposed to hunger and the insults of the *Spaniards*, which determined many of them to enter into the service of *Spain*, in order to escape the extreme misery, under which they groaned.

Some of the *French*, newly enlisted in the *Spanish* troops, informed the Governor of the  
*Havanna*,

*Havanna*, that the *French* garrison, left at *Pensacola*, was very weak: He, in his turn, resolved to carry that fort by way of reprisal. For that purpose he caused a *Spanish* vessel, with that which the *French* had brought to the *Havanna*, to be armed. The *Spanish* vessel stationed itself behind the *Isle St. Rose*, and the *French* vessel came before the fort with *French* colours. The sentinel enquired, who commanded the vessel? They answered, *M. de Richebourg*. This vessel, after anchoring, took down her *French*, and hoisted *Spanish* colours, firing three guns: At which signal, agreed on by the *Spaniards*, the *Spanish* vessel joined the first; then they summoned the *French* to surrender. *M. de Chateauguiere* rejected the proposition, fired upon the *Spaniards*, and they continued cannonading each other till night.

On the following day the cannonading was continued till noon, when the *Spaniards* ceased firing, in order to summon the Commandant anew to surrender the fort: He demanded four days, and was allowed two. During that time, he sent to ask succours of his brother, who was in no condition to send him any.

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The term being expired, the attack was renewed, the Commandant bravely defending himself till night; which two thirds of the garrison availed themselves of, to abandon their Governor, who, having only twenty men left, saw himself unable to make any longer resistance, demanded to capitulate, and was allowed all the honours of war; but in going out of the place, he and all his men were made prisoners. This infraction of the capitulation was occasioned by the shame the *Spaniards* conceived, of being constrained to capitulate in this manner with twenty men only.

As soon as the Governor of the *Havanna* was apprized of the surrender of the fort, vainly imagining he had overthrown half his enemies at least, caused great rejoicings to be made in the island, as if he had gained a decisive victory, or carried a citadel of importance. He also sent off several vessels to victual and refresh his warriors, who according to him must have been greatly fatigued in such an action as I have just described.

The new Governor of *Pensacola* caused the fortifications to be repaired and even augmented; sent afterwards the vessel, named *the Great Devil*, armed with six pieces of cannon to take *Dauphin Island*, or at least to strike terror into it.

it. The vessel, *St. Philip*, which lay in the road, entered a gut or narrow place, and there mooring across, brought all her guns to bear on the enemy : And made *the Great Devil* sensible, that Saints resist all the efforts of Hell.

This ship, by her position, served for a citadel to the whole island, which had neither fortifications nor intrenchments, nor any other sort of defence, excepting a battery of cannon at the East point, with some inhabitants, who guarded the coast, and prevented a descent. *The Great Devil*, finding she made no progress, was constrained, by way of relaxation, to go and pillage on the continent the habitation of the *Sieur Miragouine*, which was abandoned. In the mean time arrived from *Pensacola*, a little devil, a pink, to the assistance of the *Great Devil*. As soon as they joined, they began afresh to cannonade the island, which made a vigorous defence.

In the time that these two vessels attempted in vain to take the island, a squadron of five ships came in sight, four of them with *Spanish* colours, and the least carrying *French* hoisted to the top of the staff, as if taken by the four others. In this the *French* were equally

deceived with the *Spaniards*: The former, however, knew the small vessel, which was the pink, the *Mary*, commanded by the brave M. *Iapy*. The *Spaniards*, convinced by these appearances, that succours were sent them, deputed two Officers in a shalloup on board the Commodore: But they were no sooner on board, than they were made prisoners.

They were in effect three *French* men of war, with two ships of the Company, commanded by M. *Champmelin*. These ships brought upwards of eight hundred men, and thirty Officers, as well superior as subaltern, all of them old and faithful servants of the King, in order to remain in *Louisiana*. The *Spaniards*, finding their error, fled to *Pensacola*, to carry the news of this succour being arrived for the *French*.

The squadron anchored before the island, hoisted *French* colours, and fired a salvo, which was answered by the place. The *St. Philip* was drawn out and made to join the squadron: A new embarkation of troops was made, and the *Mary* left before *Isle Dauphine*.

On September the 7th, finding the wind favourable, the squadron set sail for *Pensacola*:

By

By the way, the troops that were to make the attack on the continent, were landed near *Rio Perdido*; after which the ships, preceded by a boat, which shewed the way, entered the harbour, and anchored, and laid their broad sides, in spite of several discharges of cannon from the fort, which is upon the *Ile St. Rose*. The ships had no sooner laid their broad-sides, but the cannonade began on both sides. Our ships had two forts to batter, and seven sail of ships that lay in the harbour. But the great land fort fired only one gun on our army, in which the *Spanish* Governor, having observed upwards of three hundred *Indians*, commanded by *M. de St. Denis*, whose bravery was universally acknowledged, was struck with such a panick, from the fear of falling into their hands, that he struck, and surrendered the place.

The fight continued for about two hours longer: But the heavy metal of our *Commodore* making great execution, the *Spaniards* cried out several times on board their ships, to strike; but fear prevented their executing these orders; none but a *French* prisoner durst do it for them. They quitted their ships, leaving matches behind, which would have soon set them on fire. The *French* pri-  
soners

soners between decks, no longer hearing the least noise, surmised a flight, came on deck, discovered the stratagem of the *Spaniards*, removed the matches, and thus hindered the vessels from taking fire, acquainting the Commodore therewith. The little fort held out but an hour longer, after which it surrendered for want of gunpowder. The Commandant came himself to put his sword in the hands of M. *Champmelin*, who embraced him, returned him his sword, and told him, he knew how to distinguish between a brave Officer, and one who was not. He made his own ship his place of confinement, whereas he Commandant of the great fort was made he laughing-stock of the *French*.

All the *Spaniards* on board the ships, and those of the two forts were made prisoners of war: But the *French* deserters, to the number of forty, were made to cast lots; half of whom were hanged at the yard-arms, the rest condemned to be galley-slaves to the Company for ten years in the country.

M. *Champmelin* caused the two forts to be demolished, preserving only three or four houses, with a ware-house. These houses were to lodge the Officer, and the few soldiers,

## OF LOUISIANA. 197

diers that were left there, and one to be a guard-house. The rest of the planters were transported to *Isle Dauphine*, and M. *Champ-melin* set sail for *France* \*.

The history of *Pensacola* is the more necessary, as it is so near our settlements, that the *Spaniards* hear our guns, when we give them notice by that signal of our design to come and trade with them.

\* At the peace that soon succeeded between *France* and *Spain*, *Pensacola* was restored to the last.



THE  
OFFICE OF THE  
SHERIFF OF THE  
COUNTY OF  
NEW YORK

Y. M. O. T. S. I. H.

TO

LOUISIANA

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SHERRIFF OF THE

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THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
LOUISIANA.

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BOOK II.  
*Of the Country, and its Products.*

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CHAP. I.  
*Geographical Description of Louisiana.  
Its Climate.*

**L**OUISIANA is that part of North America, which is bounded on the South by the Gulf of Mexico; on the East by Carolina, an English Colony, and by a part of Canada; on the West, by New Mexico; and on the North, in part by Canada; in part it extends, without any assignable bounds, to the *Terræ Incognitæ*, ad-  
K 4 joining



joining to *Hudson's Bay* \*. Its breadth is about two hundred leagues †, extending between the *Spanish* and *English* settlements; its length undetermined, as being altogether unknown. However, the source of the *Mississipi* will afford us some light on this head.

The Climate of *Louisiana* varies in proportion as it extends northward: All that can be said of it in general is, that its southern parts are not so scorching as those of *Africa* in the same latitude; and that the northern parts are colder than the corresponding parts of *Europe*. *New Orleans*, which lies in Lat.  $30^{\circ}$ , as do the more northerly coasts of *Barbary* and *Egypt*, enjoys the same temperature of climate as *Languedoc*. Two degrees higher up, at the *Natchez*, where I resided for eight years, the climate is far more mild than at *New Orleans*, the country lying higher: And at the *Illinois*, which is between  $45^{\circ}$  and  $46^{\circ}$ , the summer is

\* By the Charter granted by *Louis XIV.* to *M. Crenat*, *Louisiana* extends only "from the edge of the sea as far as "the *Illinois*," which is not above half the extent assigned by our Author.

† According to the best Maps and Accounts extant, the distance from the *Mississipi* to the Mountains of *New Mexico* is about nine hundred miles, and from the *Mississipi* to the *Atlantic Ocean* about six hundred; reckoning sixty miles to a degree, and in a strait line.

in no respect hotter than at *Rochelle*; but we find the frosts harder, and a more plentiful fall of snow. This difference of climate from that of *Africa* and *Europe*, I ascribe to two causes: The first is, the number of woods, which, tho' scattered up and down, cover the face of this country: The second, the great number of rivers. The former prevent the sun from warming the earth; and the latter diffuse a great degree of humidity: Not to mention the continuity of this country with those to the northward; from which it follows that the winds blowing from that quarter are much colder, than if they traversed the sea in their course. For it is well known, that the air is never so hot, and never so cold at sea, as on land.

We ought not therefore to be surprized, if in the southern part of *Louisiana*, a North wind obliges people in summer to be warmer cloathed; or if in winter a South wind admits of a lighter dress; as naturally owing, at the one time, to the dryness of the wind, at the other, to the proximity of the Equator.

Few days pass in *Louisiana* without seeing the sun. The rain pours down there in sudden heavy showers, which do not last long, but disappear in half an hour, perhaps. The

dews are very plentiful, advantageously supplying the place of rain.

We may therefore well imagine, that the air is perfectly good there ; the blood is pure ; the people are healthy ; subject to few diseases in the vigour of life, and without decrepitude in old age, which they carry to a far greater length than in *France*. People live to a long and agreeable old age in *Louisiana*, if they are but sober and temperate.

This country is extremely well watered, but much more so in some places than in others. The *Mississipi* divides this Colony from North to South into two parts almost equal. The first discoverers of this river by the way of *Canada*, called it *Colbert*, in honour of that great Minister. By some savages of the North it is called *Meact-Chassipi*, which literally denotes, *the ancient Father of Rivers*, of which the *French* have, by corruption, formed *Mississipi*. Other *Indians*, especially those lower down the river, call it *Balbancha* ; and at last the *French* have given it the name of *St. Louis*.

Several travellers have in vain attempted to go up to its source ; which, however, is well known, whatever some authors, misinformed, may alledge to the contrary. We here subjoin the

the accounts that may be most depended upon.

M. de Charleville, a *Canadian*, and a relation of M. de Biainville, Commandant General of this Colony, told me, that at the time of the settlement of the *French*, curiosity alone had led him to go up this river to its sources; that for this end, he fitted out a canoe, made of the bark of the birch-tree, in order to be more portable in case of need. And that having thus set out with two *Canadians* and two *Indians*, with goods, ammunition, and provisions, he went up the river three hundred leagues to the North, above the *Illinois*: That there he found the *Fall*, called *St. Antony's*. This *Fall* is a flat rock, which traverses the river, and gives it only between eight or ten feet fall. He caused his canoe and effects to be carried over that place; and that embarking afterwards above the *Fall*, he continued going up the river an hundred leagues more to the North, where he met the *Sioux*, a people inhabiting that country, at some distance from the *Missisipi*; some say, on each side of it.

The *Sioux*, little accustomed to see *Europeans*, were surprized at seeing him, and asked whither he was going. He told them, up the

*Mississipi* to its source. They answered, that the country whither he was going was very bad, and where he would have great difficulty to find game for subsistence; that it was a great way off, reckoned as far from the source to the fall, as from this last to the sea. According to this information, the *Mississipi* must measure from its source to its mouth between fifteen and sixteen hundred leagues, as they reckon eight hundred leagues from *St. Antony's Fall* to the sea. This conjecture is the more probable, as that far to the North, several rivers of a pretty long course fall into the *Mississipi*; and that even above *St. Antony's Fall* we find in this river between thirty and thirty five fathom water, and a breadth in proportion; which can never be from a source at no great distance off. I may add, that all the *Indians*, informed by those nearer the source, are of the same opinion.

Tho' M. de Charleville did not see the source of the *Mississipi*, he, however, learned, that a great many rivers empty their waters into it: That even above *St. Antony's Fall*, he saw rivers on each side of the *Mississipi*; having a course of upwards of an hundred leagues.

It is proper to observe, that in going down the river from *St. Antony's Fall*, the right hand

is the West, the left the East. The first river we meet from the Fall, and some leagues lower down, is the river *St. Peter*, which comes from the West: Lower down to the East, is the river *St. Croix*, both of them tolerable large rivers. We meet several others still less, the names of which are of no consequence. Afterwards we meet with the river *Moingona*, which comes from the West, about two hundred and fifty leagues below the Fall, and upwards of an hundred and fifty leagues in length. This river is somewhat brackish. From that river to the *Illinois*, several rivulets, or brooks, both to the right and left, fall into the *Mississipi*. The river of the *Illinois* comes from the East, and takes its rise on the frontiers of *Canada*; its length is two hundred leagues.

The river *Missouri* comes from a source about eight hundred leagues distant; and running from North-west to South-east, discharges itself into the *Mississipi*, about four or five leagues below the river of the *Illinois*. This river receives several others, in particular the river of the *Canzas*, which runs above an hundred and fifty leagues. From the rivers of the *Illinois* and the *Missouri* to the sea are reckoned five hundred leagues, and three hundred to *St.*

*Antony's*

*Antony's Fall*: From the *Missouri* to the *Wabache*, or *Ohio*, an hundred leagues. By this last river is the passage from *Louisiana* to *Canada*. This voyage is performed from *New Orleans* by going up the *Mississipi* to the *Wabache*; which they go up in the same manner quite to the river of the *Miamis*; in which they proceed as far as the Carrying-place; from which there are two leagues to a little river which falls into Lake *Erie*. Here they change their vessels; they come in pettyaugers, and go down the river *St. Laurence* to *Quebec* in birch canoes. On the river *St. Laurence* are several carrying-places, on account of its many falls or cataracts.

Those who have performed this voyage, have told me, they reckoned eighteen hundred leagues from *New Orleans* to *Quebec* †. Tho' the *Wabache* is considered in *Louisiana*, as the most considerable of the rivers which come from *Canada*, and which, uniting in one bed form the river, commonly called by that name, yet all the *Canadian* travellers assure me, that the river called *Ohio*, and which falls into the *Wabache*, comes a much longer way than this last; which should be a reason for giving it the name *Ohio*; but custom has prevailed in this respect \*.

† It is not above nine hundred leagues.

\* But not among the *English*; we call it the *Ohio*.

From



From the *Wabache*, and on the same side, to *Manchac*, we see but very few rivers, and those very small ones, which fall into the *Missisipi*, tho' there are nearly three hundred and fifty leagues from the *Wabache* to *Manchac* \*. This will, doubtless, appear something extraordinary to those unacquainted with the country.

The reason, that may be assigned for it, appears quite natural and striking. In all that part of *Louisiana*, which is to the East of the *Missisipi*, the lands are so high in the neighbourhood of the river, that in many places the rain-water runs off from the banks of the *Missisipi*, and discharges itself into rivers, which fall either directly into the sea, or into lakes. Another very probable reason is, that from the *Wabache* to the sea, no rain falls but in sudden gusts; which defect is compensated by the abundant dews, so that the plants lose nothing by that means. The *Wabache* has a course of three hundred leagues, and the *Ohio* has its source a hundred leagues still farther off.

\* That is, from the mouth of the *Ohio* to the river *Iberville*, which other accounts make but two hundred and fifty leagues.



In continuing to go down the *Mississipi*, from the *Wabache* to the river of the *Arkansas*, we observe but few rivers, and those pretty small. The most considerable is that of *St. Francis*, which is distant thirty and odd leagues from that of the *Arkansas*. It is on this river of *St. Francis*, that the hunters of *New Orleans* go every winter to make salt provisions, tallow, and bears-oil, for the supply of the Capital.

The river of the *Arkansas*, which is thirty-five leagues lower down, and two hundred leagues from *New Orleans*, is so denominated from the *Indians* of that name, who dwell on its banks, a little above its confluence with the *Mississipi*. It runs three hundred leagues, and its source is in the same latitude with *Santa-Fé*, in *New Mexico*, in the mountains of which it rises. It runs up a little to the North for a hundred leagues, by forming a flat elbow, or winding, and returns from thence to the South-east, quite to the *Mississipi*. It has a cataract, or fall, about the middle of its course. Some call it the *White River*, because in its course it receives a river of that name. The *Great Cut-point* is about forty leagues below the river of the *Arkansas*: This was a long circuit which the *Mississipi* formerly

merly took, and which it has abridged, by making its way thro' this point of land.

Below this river, still going towards the sea, we observe scarce any thing but brooks or rivulets, except the river of the *Yafous*, sixty leagues lower down. This river runs but about fifty leagues, and will hardly admit of a boat for a great way: It has taken its name from the nation of the *Yafous*, and some others dwelling on its banks. Twenty-eight leagues below the river of the *Yafous*, is a great cliff of a reddish free-stone: Over against this cliff are the great and little whirlpools.

From this little river, we meet but with very small ones, till we come to the *Red River*, called at first the *Marne*, because nearly as big as that river, which falls into the *Seine*. The *Nachitoches* dwell on its banks, and it was distinguished by the name of that nation; but its common name, and which it still bears, is that of the *Red River*. It takes its rise in *New Mexico*, forms an elbow to the North, in the same manner as the river of the *Arkansas*, falls down afterwards towards the *Mississippi*, running South-east. They generally allow it a course of two hundred leagues. At about ten leagues from its confluence it receives the *Black River*, or the river of the *Wachitas*,

*Wachitas*, which takes its rise pretty near that of the *Arkansas*. This rivulet, or source, forms, as is said, a fork pretty near its rise, one arm of which falls into the river of the *Arkansas*, the largest forms the *Black River*. Twenty leagues below the *Red River* is the *Little Cut-point*, and a league below that Point are the little Cliffs.

From the *Red River* to the sea we observe nothing but some small brooks: But on the East side, twenty-five leagues above *New Orleans*, we find a channel, which is dry at low water. The inundations of the *Mississipi* formed this channel (which is called *Manchac*) below some high lands, which terminate near that place. It discharges itself into the Lake *Maurepas*, and from thence into that of *St. Louis*, of which I gave an account before.

The channel runs East South-east; formerly there was a passage thro' it; but as present it is so choaked up with dead wood, that it begins to have no water \* but at the place where it receives the river *Amité*, which is

\* *Manchac* is almost dry for three quarters of the year: But during the inundation, the waters of the river have a vent thro' it into the Lakes *Pontchartrain* and *St. Louis*. *Dumont*, II. 297.

This is the river *Iberville*, which is to be the boundary of the *British* dominions.

pretty

pretty large, and which runs seventy leagues in a very fine country.

A very small river falls into the Lake *Maurepas*, to the East of *Manchac*. In proceeding Eastward, we may pass from this lake into that of *St. Louis*, by a river formed by the waters of the *Amité*. In going to the North of this lake, we meet to the East the little river *Tandgi-pao*. From thence proceeding always East, we come to the river *Quésouété*, which is long and beautiful, and comes from the *Chattaws*. Proceeding in the same route, we meet the river *Castin-Bayouc*: We may afterwards quit the Lake by the Channel, which borders the same country, and proceeding Eastward we meet with *Pearl River*, which falls into this channel.

Farther up the coast, which lies from West to East, we meet *St. Louis's Bay*, into which a little river of that name discharges itself: Farther on, we meet the river of the *Paska-Ogoulas*: And at length we arrive at the Bay of *Mobile*, which runs upwards of thirty leagues into the country, where it receives the river of the same name, which runs for about a hundred and fifty leagues from North to South. All the rivers I have just mentioned, and which fall not into the *Mississipi*, do in like manner run from North to South.

*Description*

*Description of the Lower Louisiana, and  
Mouths of the Mississippi.*

**I** Return to *Manchac*, where I quitted the *Mississipi*. At a little distance from *Manchac* we meet the river of the *Plaquemines*; it lies to the West, and is rather a creek than a river. Three or four leagues lower down is the *Fork*, which is a channel running to the West of the *Mississipi*, thro' which a part of the inundations of that river run off. These waters pass thro' several lakes, and from thence to the sea, by *Ascension Bay*. As to the other rivers to the West of this Bay, their names are unknown.

The waters which fall into those Lakes consist not only of such as pass thro' this channel, but also of those that come out of the *Mississipi*, when overflowing its banks on each side: For, of all the water which comes out of the *Mississipi* over its banks, not a drop ever returns into its bed; but this is only to be understood of the low lands, that is, between fifty and sixty leagues from the sea Eastward, and upwards of a hundred leagues Westward.

It will, doubtless, seem strange, that a river which overflows its banks, should never after  
recover

recover its waters again, either in whole or in part; and this will appear so much the more singular, as every where else it happens otherwise in the like circumstances.

It appeared no less strange to myself; and I have on all occasions endeavoured to the utmost, to find out what could produce an effect, which really appeared to me very extraordinary, and, I imagine, not without success.

From *Manchac* down to the sea, it is probable, and even in some degree certain, that all the lands thereabouts are brought down and accumulated by means of the ooze, which the *Mississipi* carries along with it in its annual inundations; which begin in the month of *March*, by the melting of the snow to the North, and last for about three months. Those oozy or muddy lands easily produce herbs and reeds; and when the *Mississipi* happens to overflow the following year, these herbs and reeds intercept a part of this ooze, so that those at a distance from the river cannot retain so large a quantity of it, since those that grow next the river have stopt the greatest part; and by a necessary consequence, the others farther off, and in proportion as they are distant from the *Mississipi*, can retain a much less quantity of the mud. In this manner

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ner the land rising higher along the river, in process of time the banks of the *Mississipi* became higher than the lands about it. In like manner also these neighbouring lakes, on each side of the river, are remains of the sea, which are not yet filled up. Other rivers have firm banks, formed by the hands of Nature, a land of the same nature with the continent, and always adhering thereto: These sorts of banks, instead of augmenting, do daily diminish, either by sinking, or tumbling down into the bed of the river. The banks of the *Mississipi*, on the contrary, increase, and cannot diminish in the low and accumulated lands; because the ooze, alone deposited on ~~its~~ banks, increase them; which, besides, is the reason, that the *Mississipi* becomes narrower, in place of washing away the earth, and enlarging its bed, as all other known rivers do. If we consider these facts, therefore, we ought no longer to be surprized, that the waters of the *Mississipi*, when once they have left their bed, can never return thither again.

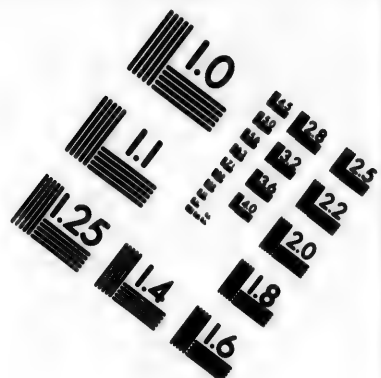
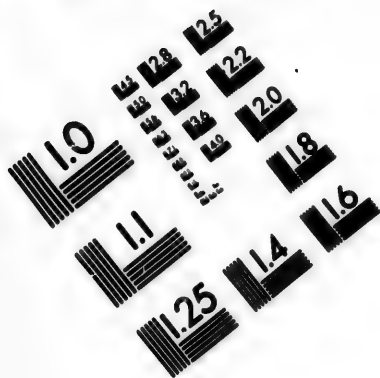
In order to prove this augmentation of lands, I shall relate what happened near *New Orleans*: One of the inhabitants caused a well to be sunk at a little distance from the *Mississipi*, in order to procure a clearer water. At twenty feet



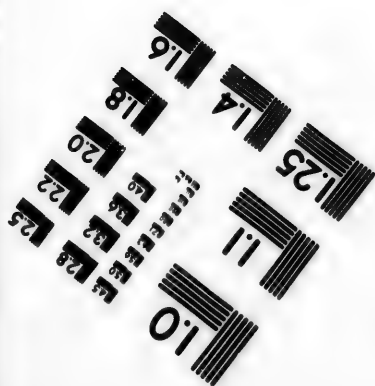
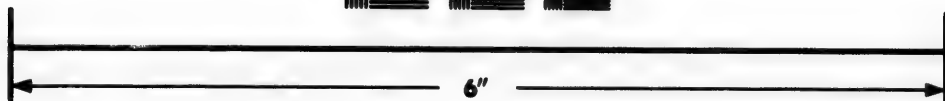
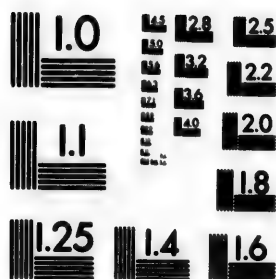
feet deep there was found a tree laid flat, three feet in diameter: The height of the earth was therefore augmented twenty feet since the fall or lodging of that tree, as well by the accumulated mud, as by the rotting of the leaves, which fall every winter, and which the *Mississippi* carries down in vast quantities. In effect it sweeps down a great deal of mud, because it runs for twelve hundred leagues at least across a country, which is nothing else but earth, which the depth of the river sufficiently proves. It carries down vast quantities of leaves, canes, and trees, upon its waters, the breadth of which is always above half a league, and sometimes a league and a quarter. Its banks are covered with much wood, sometimes for the breadth of a league on each side, from its source to its mouth. There is nothing therefore more easy to be conceived, than that this river carries down with its waters a prodigious quantity of ooze, leaves, canes, and trees, which it continually tears up by the roots, and that the sea throwing back again all these things, they should necessarily produce the lands in question, and which are sensibly encreasing. At the entrance of the Pass or Channel to the South East there was built a small Fort, still called *Balise*. This Fort was built on a little island, without the mouth of the river.







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river. In 1734 it stood on the same spot, and I have been told that at present it is half a league within the river: The land therefore hath in twenty years gained this space on the sea. Let us now resume the sequel of the Geographical Description of *Louisiana*.

The coast is bounded to the West by *St. Bernard's Bay*, where *M. de la Salle* landed; into this bay a small river falls, and there are some others, which discharge their waters between this bay and *Ascension Bay*; the Planters seldom frequent that coast. On the East the coast is bounded by *Rio Perdido*, which the *French* corruptedly call *aux Perdrix*; *Rio Perdido* signifying *Lost River*, aptly so called by the *Spaniards*, because it loses itself under ground, and afterwards appears again, and discharges itself into the sea, a little to the East of *Mobile*, on which the first *French* Planters settled.

From the *Fork* down to the Sea, there is no river; nor is it possible there should be any, after what I have related: On the contrary, we find at a small distance from the Fork another channel to the East, called the *Bayouc of le Sueur*: It is full of a soft ooze or mud, and communicates with the lakes, which lie to the East.

On

On coming nearer to the sea, we meet, at about eight leagues from the principal mouth of the *Mississipi*, the first Pass; and a league lower down, the *Otter Pass*. These two passes, or channels, are only for pettyaugers. From this place there is no land fit to tread on, it being all a quagmire down to the sea. There also we find a Point, which parts the mouths of the *Mississipi*: That to the right is called the *South-Pass*, or Channel; the West Point of which runs two leagues farther into the sea than the Point of the *South-east-Pass*, which is to the left of that of the South Pass. At first, vessels entred by the South-east Pass, but before we go down to it, we find to the left the *East-Pass*, which is that by which ships enter at present.

At each of these three Passes, or Channels, there is a Bar, as in all other rivers: These bars are three quarters of a league broad, with only eight or nine feet water: But there is a channel through this bar, which being often subject to shift, the coasting pilot is obliged to be always sounding, in order to be sure of the pass: This channel is, at low water, between seventeen and eighteen feet deep \*.

\* I shall make no mention of the islands, which are frequent in the *Mississipi*, as being, properly speaking, no-

This description may suffice to shew, that the falling in with the land from sea is bad ; the land scarce appears two leagues off ; which doubtless made the *Spaniards* call the *Mississipi* *Rio Escondido*, the *hid River*. This river is generally muddy, owing to the waters of the *Missouri* ; for before this junction, the water of the *Mississipi* is very clear. I must not omit mentioning, that no ship can either enter, or continue in the river, when the waters are high, on account of the prodigious numbers of trees, and vast quantities of dead wood, which it carries down ; and which, together with the canes, leaves, mud, and sand, which the sea throws back upon the coast, are continually augmenting the land, and make it project into the Gulf of *Mexico*, like the bill of a bird.

I should be naturally led to divide *Louisiana* into the Higher and Lower, on account of the great difference there is between the two principal parts of this vast country. The Higher I would call that part, in which we find stone, which we first meet with between the river of the *Natchez* and that of the *Tasous*, between which is a cliff of a fine free-stone ; and I

thing but little isles, produced by some trees, tho' the soil be nothing but a sand bottom.

would

would terminate that part at *Manchac*, where the high lands end. I would extend the *Lower Louisiana* from thence down to the sea. The bottom of the lands on the hills is a red clay, and so compact, as might afford a solid foundation for any building whatever. This clay is covered by a light earth, which is almost black, and very fertile. The grass grows there knee deep; and in the bottoms, which separate these small eminences, it is higher than the tallest man. Towards the end of *September* both are successively set on fire; and in eight or ten days young grass shoots up half a foot high. One will easily judge, that in such pastures herds of all creatures fatten extraordinarily. The flat country is watery, and appears to have been formed by every thing that comes down to the sea. I shall add, that pretty near the *Nachitoches* we find banks of muscle-shells, such as those of which *Cockle-Island* is formed. The neighbouring nation affirms, that according to their old tradition, the sea formerly came up to this place. The women of this nation go and gather these shells, and make a powder of them, which they mix with the earth, of which they make their pottery, or earthen ware. However, I would not advise the use of these shells indifferently for this purpose, because they are naturally

apt to crack in the fire : I have therefore reason to think, that those found at the *Nachitoches* have acquired their good quality only by the discharge of their salts, from continuing for so many ages out of the sea.

If we may give credit to the tradition of these people, and if we would reason on the facts I have advanced, we shall be naturally led to believe, and indeed every thing in this country shews it, that the Lower *Louisiana* is a country gained on the sea, whose bottom is a crystal sand, white as snow, fine as flour, and such as is found both to the East and West of the *Mississipi* ; and we may expect, that in future ages, the sea and the river may form another land like that of the Lower *Louisiana*. The Fort *Balise* shews, that a century is sufficient to extend *Louisiana* two leagues towards the sea.



## CHAP. II.

*The Author's Journey in Louisiana, from  
the Natchez to the River St. Francis,  
and the Country of the Chicafaws.*

**E**VER since my arrival in *Louisiana*, I made it my business to get information in whatever was new therein, and to make discoveries of such things as might be serviceable to society. I therefore resolved to take a journey through the country. And after leaving my plantation to the care of my friends and neighbours, I prepared for a journey into the interior parts of the province, in order to learn the nature of the soil, its various productions, and to make discoveries not mentioned by others.

I wanted to travel both for my own instruction, and for the benefit of the publick : But at the same time I desired to be alone, without any of my own countrymen with me ; who, as they neither have patience, nor are made for fatigue, would be ever teasing me to return again, and not readily take up either with the fare or accommodations, to be met with on such a journey. I therefore

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pitched upon ten *Indians*, who are indefatigable, robust, and tractable, and sufficiently skilled in hunting; a qualification necessary on such journeys. I explained to them my whole design; told them, we should avoid passing thro' any inhabited countries, and would take our journeys through such as were unknown and uninhabited; because I travelled, in order to discover what no one before could inform me about. This explication pleased them; and on their part they promised, I should have no reason to be dissatisfied with them. But they objected, they were under apprehensions of losing themselves in countries they did not know. To remove these apprehensions, I shewed them a mariner's compass, which removed all their difficulties, after I had explained to them the manner of using it, in order to avoid losing our way.

We set out in the month of *September*, which is the best season of the year for beginning a journey in this country: In the first place, because, during the summer, the grass is too high for travelling; whereas in the month of *September*, the meadows, the grass of which is then dry, are set on fire, and the ground becomes smooth, and easy to walk on: And hence it is, that at this time,  
clouds

clouds of smoke are seen for several days together to extend over a long track of country; sometimes to the extent of between twenty and thirty leagues in length, by two or three leagues in breadth, more or less, according as the wind sets, and is higher or lower. In the second place, this season is the most commodious for travelling over those countries; because, by means of the rain, which ordinarily falls after the grass is burnt, the game spread themselves all over the meadows, and delight to feed on the new grass; which is the reason why travellers more easily find provisions at this time than at any other. What besides facilitates these excursions in Autumn, or in the beginning of Winter, is, that all works in the fields are then at an end, or at least the hurry of them is over.

For the first days of our journey the game was pretty rare, because they shun the neighbourhood of men; if you except the deer, which are spread all over the country, their nature being to roam indifferently up and down; so that at first we were obliged to put up with this fare. We often met with flights of partridges, which the natives cannot kill, because they cannot shoot flying; I killed some for a change. The second day I had a turkey-hen brought to regale me. The

discoverer, who killed it, told me, there were a great many in the same place, but that he could do nothing without a dog. I have often heard of a turkey-chace, but never had an opportunity of being at one: I went with him, and took my dog along with me. On coming to the spot, we soon descried the hens, which ran off with such speed, that the swiftest *Indian* would lose his labour, in attempting to outrun them. My dog soon came up with them, which made them take to their wings, and perch on the next trees; as long as they are not pursued in this manner, they only run, and are soon out of sight. I came near their place of retreat, killed the largest, a second, and my discoverer a third. We might have killed the whole flock; for, while they see any men, they never quit the tree they have once perched on. Shooting scares them not, as they only look at the bird that drops, and set up a timorous cry, as he falls.

Before I proceed, it is proper to say a word concerning my discoverers, or scouts. I had always three of them out, one a-head, and one on each hand of me; commonly distant a league from me, and as much from each other. Their condition of scouts, prevented not their carrying each his bed, and provisions

sions for thirty-six hours upon occasion. Those near my own person were more loaded, I however sent them out, sometimes one, sometimes another, either to a neighbouring mountain or valley: So that I had three or four at least, both on my right and left, who went out to make discoveries a small distance off. I did thus, in order to have nothing to reproach myself with, in point of vigilance, since I had begun to take the trouble of making discoveries.

The next business was, to make ourselves mutually understood, notwithstanding our distance: We agreed, therefore, on certain signals, which are absolutely necessary on such occasions. Every day, at nine in the morning, at noon, and at three in the afternoon, we made a smoke. This signal was the hour marked for making a short halt, in order to know, whether the scouts followed each other, and whether they were nearly at the distance agreed on. These smokes were made at the hours I mentioned, which are the divisions of the day according to the *Indians*. They divide their day into four equal parts; the first contains the half of the morning; the second, is at noon; the third comprizes the half of the afternoon; and the fourth, the other half

of the afternoon to the evening. It was according to this usage our signals were mutually made, by which we regulated our course, and places of rendezvous.

We marched for some days without finding any thing, which could either engage my attention, or satisfy my curiosity. True it is, this was sufficiently made up in another respect; as we travelled over a charming country, which might justly furnish our painters of the finest imagination with genuine notions of landscapes. Mine, I own, was highly delighted with the sight of fine plains, diversified with very extensive and highly delightful meadows. The plains were intermixed with thickets, planted by the hand of Nature herself; and interspersed with hills, running off in gentle declivities, and with valleys, thick set, and adorned with woods, which serve for a retreat to the most timorous animals, as the thickets screen the buffaloes from the abundant dews of the country.

I longed much to kill a buffalo with my own hand; I therefore told my people, my intention to kill one of the first herd we should meet; nor did a day pass, in which we did not see several herds; the least of which ex-  
ceeded

ceeded a hundred and thirty or a hundred and fifty in number.

Next morning we espied a herd of upwards of two hundred. The wind stood, as I could have wished, being in our faces, and blowing from the herd; which is a great advantage in this chase; because when the wind blows from you towards the buffaloes, they come to scent you, and run away, before you can come within gun-shot of them; whereas, when the wind blows from them on the hunters, they do not fly till they can distinguish you by sight: And then, what greatly favours your coming very near to them is, that the curled hair, which falls down between their horns upon their eyes, is so bushy, as greatly to confuse their sight. In this manner I came within full gun-shot of them, pitched upon one of the fattest, shot him at the extremity of the shoulder, and brought him down stone-dead. The natives, who stood looking on, were ready to fire, had I happened to wound him but slightly; for in that case, these animals are apt to turn upon the hunter, who thus wounds them.

Upon seeing the buffalo drop down dead, and the rest taking to flight, the natives told me, with a smile: "You kill the males, do

L 6 "you



"you intend to make tallow?" I answered, I did it on purpose, to shew them the manner of making him good meat, though a male. I caused his belly to be opened quite warm, the entrails to be taken out directly, the bunch, tongue, and chines to be cut out; one of the chines to be laid on the coals, of which I made them all taste; and they all agreed, the meat was juicy, and of an exquisite flavour.

I then took occasion to remonstrate to them, that if, instead of killing the cows, as was always their custom, they killed the bulls, the difference in point of profit would be very considerable: As, for instance, a good commerce with the *French* in tallow, with which the bulls abound; bull's flesh is far more delicate and tender than cow's; a third advantage is, the felling of the skins at a higher rate, as being much better; in fine, this kind of game, so advantageous to the country, would thereby escape being quite destroyed; whereas, by killing the cows, the breed of these animals is greatly impaired.

I made a soup, that was of an exquisite flavour, but somewhat fat, of the broth boiled from the marrow-bones of this buffalo, the rest of the broth serving to make maize-gruel, called



called *Sagumity*, which to my taste surpassed the best dish in *France*: The bunch on the back would have graced the table of any Prince.

In the route I held, I kept more on the sides of the hills than on the plains. Above some of these sides, or declivities, I found, in some places, little eminences, which lay peeled, or bare, and disclosed a firm and compact clay, or pure matrix, and of the species of that of *Lapis Calaminaris*. The intelligent in Mineralogy understand what I would be at. The little grass, which grows there, was observed to droop, as also three or four mis-shapen trees, no bigger than one's leg; one of which I caused to be cut down; when, to my astonishment I saw, it was upwards of sixty years standing. The neighbouring country was fertile, in proportion to its distance from this spot. Near that place we saw game of every kind, and in plenty, and never towards the summit.

We crossed the *Mississipi* several times upon *Cajoux*, (rafts, or floats, made of several bundles of canes, laid across each other; a kind of extemporaneous pontoon,) in order to take a view of mountains, which had raised my curiosity. I observed, that both sides of the  
river

river had their several advantages; but that the West side is better watered; appeared also to be more fruitful both in minerals, and in what relates to agriculture; for which last it seems much more adapted than the East side.

Notwithstanding our precaution to make signals, one of my scouts happened one day to stray, because the weather was foggy; so that he did not return at night to our hut; at which I was very uneasy, and could not sleep; as he was not returned, tho' the signals of call had been repeated till night closed. About nine next morning he cast up, telling us he had been in pursuit of a drove of deer, which were led by one that was altogether white: But that not being able to come up with them, he picked up, on the side of a hill, some small sharp stones, of which he brought a sample.

These stones I received with pleasure, because I had not yet seen any in all this country, only a hard red free-stone in a cliff on the *Mississipi*. After carefully examining those, which my discoverer brought me, I found they were a *gypsum*. I took home some pieces, and on my return examined them more attentively; found them to be very clear, transparent,

rent, and friable; when calcined, they turned extremely white, and with them I made some factitious marble. This gave me hopes, that this country, producing Plaster of *Paris*, might, besides, have stones for building.

I wanted to see the spot myself: We sat out about noon, and travelled for about three leagues before we came to it. I examined the spot, which to me appeared to be a large quarry of Plaster.

As to the white deer abovementioned, I learned from the *Indians*, that some such were to be met with, tho' but rarely, and that only in countries, not frequented by the hunters.

The wind being set in for rain, we resolved to put ourselves under shelter. The place where the bad weather overtook us was very fit to set up at. On going out to hunt, we discovered, at five hundred paces off, in the defile, or narrow pass, a brook of a very clear water, a very commodious watering-place for the buffaloes, which were in great numbers all around us.

My companions soon raised a cabin, well-secured to the North. As we resolved to continue there for eight days at least, they made it so close as to keep out the cold: In the night,

night, I felt nothing of the severity of the North wind, tho' I lay but lightly covered. My bed consisted of a bear's skin, and two robes or coats of buffalo; the bear skin, with the flesh side undermost, being laid on leaves, and the pile uppermost by way of straw-bed; one of the buffalo coats folded double by way of feather-bed; one half of the other under me served for a mattress, and the other over me for a coverlet: Three canes, or boughs, bent to a semicircle, one at the head, another in the middle, and a third at the feet, supported a cloth, which formed my tester and curtains, and secured me from the injuries of the air, and the stings of the gnats and moskitto's. My *Indians* had their ordinary hunting and travelling beds, which consist of a deer skin and a buffalo coat, which they always carry with them, when they expect to lie out of their villages. We rested nine days, and regaled ourselves with choice buffalo, turkey, partridge, pheasants, &c.

The discovery I had made of the plaster, put me to look out, during our stay, in all the places round about, for many leagues. I was at last tired of beating about such fine plains, without discovering the least thing, and I had resolved to go far to the North, when

when at the noon-signal the scout a-head waited to shew me a shining and sharp stone, of the length and size of one's thumb, and as square as a joiner could have made a piece of wood of the same bigness. I imagined it might be rock-crystal; To be assured thereof, I took a large musquet-flint in my left hand, presenting its head, or thick end, on which I struck with one of the edges of the crystal; and drew much more fire than with the finest steel: And notwithstanding the many strokes, I gave, the piece of crystal was not in the least scratched or streaked.

I examined these stones, and found pieces of different magnitudes, some square, others with six faces, even and smooth like mirrors, highly transparent, without any veins or spots. Some of these pieces jutted out of the earth, like ends of beams, two feet and upwards in length; others in considerable numbers, from seven to nine inches; above all, those with six panes, or faces. There was a great number of a middling and smaller sort: My people wanted to carry some with them; but I dissuaded them. My reason was, I apprehended some *Frenchman* might by presents prevail on them to discover the place.

For

For my part, I carefully observed the latitude, and followed, on setting out, a particular point of the compass, to come to a river which I knew. I took that route, under pretence of going to a certain nation, to procure dry provisions, which we were in want of, and which are of great help on a journey.

We arrived, after seven days march, at that nation, by whom we were well received. My hunters brought in daily many duck and teal. I agreed with the natives of the place for a large pettyauger of black walnut, to go down their river, and afterwards to go up the *Missippi*.

I had a strong inclination to go up still higher North, in order to discover mines. We embarked, and the eleventh day of our passage I caused the pettyauger to be unladen of every thing, and concealed in the water, which was then low. I loaded seven men with the things we had.

Matters thus ordered, we set out according to the intention I had to go Northward. I observed every day, with new pleasure, the more we advanced to that quarter, the more beautiful and fertile the country was, abounding in game of every kind: The herds of deer



deer are numerous; at every turn we meet with them; and not a day passed without seeing herds of buffaloes, sometimes five or six, of upwards of an hundred in a drove.

In such journeys as these, we always take up our night's lodging near wood and water, where we put up in good time: Then at sunset, when every thing in Nature is hush'd, we were charmed with the enchanting warbling of different birds; so that one would be inclined to say, they reserved this favourable moment for the melody and harmony of their song, to celebrate, undisturbed and at their ease, the benefits of the Creator. On the other hand, we are disturbed in the night, by the hideous noise of the numberless water-fowls, that are to be seen on the *Mississipi*, and every river or lake near it, such as cranes, flamingos, wild geese, herons, saw-bills, ducks, &c.

As we proceeded further North, we began to see flocks of swans roam through the air, mount out of sight, and proclaim their passage by their piercing shrill cries. We for some days followed the course of a river, at the head of which we found, in a very retired place, a beaver-dam.

We

We set up our hut within reach of this retreat, or village of beavers; but at such a distance, as that they could not observe our fire. I put my people on their guard against making any noise, or firing their pieces, for fear of scaring those animals; and thought it even necessary to forbid them to cut any wood, the better to conceal ourselves.

After taking all these precautions, we rose and were on foot against the time of moonshine, posted ourselves in a place, as distant from the huts of the beavers, as from the causey, or barky which dammed up the waters of the place where they were. I took my fusil and pouch, according to my custom of never travelling without them. But each *Indian* was only to take with him a little hatchet, which all travellers in this country carry with them. I took the eldest of my retinue, after having pointed out to the others the place of ambush, and the manner in which the branches of trees we had cut were to be set to cover us. I then went towards the middle of the dam, with my old man, who had his hatchet, and ordered him softly to make a gutter, or trench, a foot wide, which he began on the outside of the causey, or dam, crossing it quite to the water.



ter. This he did, by removing the earth with his hands. As soon as the gutter was finished, and the water ran into it, we speedily, and without any noise, retired to our place of ambush, in order to observe the behaviour of the beavers in repairing this breach.

A little after we were got behind our screen of boughs, we heard the water of the gutter begin to make a noise: And a moment after, a beaver came out of his hut and plunged into the water. We could only know this by the noise, but we saw him at once upon the bank or dam, and distinctly perceived, that he took a survey of the gutter, after which he instantly gave with all his force four blows with his tail; and had scarce struck the fourth, but all the beavers threw themselves pell-mell into the water, and came upon the dam: When they were all come thither, one of them muttered and mumbled to the rest (who all stood very attentive) I know not what orders, but which they doubtless understood well, because they instantly departed, and went out on the banks of the pond, one party one way; another, another way. Those next us were between us and the dam, and we at the proper distance, not to be seen, and to observe them. Some of them

them made mortar, others carried it on their tails, which served for sledges. I observed, they put themselves two and two side by side, the one with his head to the other's tail, and thus mutually loaded each other, and trailed the mortar, which was pretty stiff, quite to the dam, where others remained to take it, put it into the gutter, and rammed it with blows of their tails.

The noise, which the water made before by its fall, soon ceased, and the breach was closed in a short time: Upon which one of the beavers struck two great blows with his tail, and instantly they all took to the water without any noise, and disappeared. We retired, in order to take a little rest in our hut; where we remained till day; but as soon as it appeared, I longed much to satisfy my curiosity about these creatures.

My people together made a pretty large and deep breach, in order to view the construction of the dam, which I shall describe presently: We then made noise enough, without further ceremony. This noise, and the water, which the beavers observed soon to lower, gave them much uneasiness; so that I saw one of them at different times come pretty near to us, in order to examine what passed.

As

As I apprehended, that when the water was run off, they would all take flight to the woods, we quitted the breach, and went to conceal ourselves all round the pond, in order to kill only one, the more narrowly to examine it; especially as these beavers were of the grey kind, which are not so common as the brown.

One of the beavers ventured to go upon the breach, after having several times approached it, and returned again like a spy. I lay in ambush in the bottom, at the end of the dam: I saw him return, he surveyed the breach, then struck four blows, which saved his life, for I then aimed at him. But these four blows, so well struck, made me judge, it was the signal of call for all the rest, just as the night before. This also made me think, he might be the overseer of the works, and I did not choose to deprive the Republic of Beavers of a member, who appeared so necessary to it. I therefore waited till others should appear: A little after, one came and passed close by me, in order to go to work; I made no scruple to lay him at his full length, on the persuasion he might only be a common labourer. My shot made them all return to their cabins, with greater speed than a hundred blows of the tail  
of

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of their Overseer could have done. As soon as I had killed this beaver, I called my companions ; and finding, the water did not run off quick enough, I caused the breach to be widened, and I examined the dead.

I observed these beavers to be a third less than the brown or common sort, but their make the same ; having the same head, same sharp teeth, same beards, legs as short, paws equally furnished with claws, and with membranes or webs, and in all respects made like the others. The only difference is, that they are of an ash-grey, and that the long pile, which passes over the soft wool, is silvered, or whitish.

During this examination, I caused my people to cut boughs, canes, and reeds, to be thrown in towards the end of the pond, in order to pass over the little mud, which was in that place ; and at the same time I caused some shot to be fired on the cabins that lay nearest us. The report of the guns and the rattling of the shot on the roofs of the cabins, made them all fly into the woods with the greatest precipitation imaginable. We came at length to a cabin, in which there were not six inches of water. I caused to undo the roof without breaking any thing, during which, I saw the piece of aspin-tree,

tree, which was laid under the cabin for their provisions.

I observed fifteen pieces of wood, with their bark in part gnawed. The cabin also had fifteen cells round the hole in the middle, at which they went out; which made me think each had his own cell.

I am now to give a sketch of the architecture of these amphibious animals, and an account of their villages; 'tis thus I call the place of their abode, after the *Canadians* and the *Indians*, with whom I agree; and allow, these animals deserve so much the more to be distinguished from others, as I find their instinct far superior to that of other animals. I shall not carry the parallel any farther, it might become offensive.

The cabins of the Beavers are round, having about ten or twelve feet in diameter, according to the number, more or less, of fixed inhabitants. I mean, that this diameter is to be taken on the flooring at about a foot above the water, when it is even with the dam: But as the upper part runs to a point, the under is much larger than the flooring, which we may represent to ourselves, by supposing all the upright posts to resemble

the legs of a great A, whose middle stroke is the flooring. These posts are picked out, and we might say, well proportioned, seeing, at the height this flooring is to be laid at, there is a hook for bearing bars, which by that means, form the circumference of the flooring. The bars again bear traverses, or cross pieces of timber, which are the joists; canes and grafts complete this flooring, which has a hole in the middle to go out at, when they please, and into this all the cells open.

The dam is formed of timbers, in the shape of *St. Andrew's cross*, or of a great X, laid close together, and kept firm by timbers laid lengthwise, which are continued from one end of the dam to the other, and placed on the *St. Andrew's crosses*: the whole is fill'd with earth, clapped close by great blows of their tails. The inside of the dam, next the water, is almost perpendicular; but on the outside it has a great slope, that grafts coming to grow thereon, may prevent the water, that passes there, to carry away the earth.

I saw them neither cut nor convey the timbers along; but it is to be presumed, their manner is the same as that of other *Beavers*, who never cut but a soft wood; for which purpose they use their four fore-teeth,

teeth, which are extremely sharp. These timbers they push and roll before them on the land, as they do on the water, till they come to the place, where they want to lay them. I observed these grey Beavers to be more chilly, or sensible of cold, than the other species: And it is doubtless for this reason, they draw nearer to the South.

We set out from this place, to come to a high ground, which seemed to be continued to a great distance. We came, the same evening, to the foot of it, but the day was too far advanced to ascend it. The day following we went up to its top, found it a flat, except some small eminences at intervals. There appeared to be very little wood on it, still less water, and least of all stone; though probably there may be some in its bowels, having observed some stones in a part where the earth was tumbled down.

We accurately examined all this rising ground, without discovering any thing; and tho' that day we travelled upwards of five leagues, yet we were not three leagues distant from the hut we set out from in the morning. This high ground would have been a very commodious situation for a fine

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palace;



palace; as from its edges is a very distant prospect.

Next day, after a ramble of about two leagues and a half, I had the signal of call to my right. I instantly flew thither; and when I came, the scout shewed me a stump sticking out of the earth knee high, and nine inches in diameter. The *Indian* took it at a distance for the stump of a tree, and was surprised to find wood cut in a country, which appeared to have been never frequented: But when he came near enough to form a judgment about it, he saw, from the figure, that it was a very different thing: And this was the reason he made the signal of call.

I was highly pleased at this discovery, which was that of a lead-ore. I had also the satisfaction to find my perseverance recompensed; but in particular I was ravished with admiration, on seeing this wonderful production, and the power of the soil of this province, constraining, as it were, the minerals to disclose themselves. I continued to search all around, and I discovered ore in several places. We returned to lodge at our last hut, on account of the convenience of water, which was too scarce on this high ground.

We



We fet out from thence, in order to come nearer to the *Mississipi*: Thro' every place we passed, nothing but herds of buffaloes, elk, deer, and other animals of every kind, were to be seen; especially near rivers and brooks. Bears, on the other hand, keep in the thick woods, where they find their proper food.

After a march of five days, I espied a mountain to my right, which seemed so high, as to excite my curiosity. Next morning I directed thither my course, where we arrived about three in the afternoon. We stopped at the foot of the mountain, where we found a fine spring issuing out of the rock.

The day following we went up to its top, where it is stoney. Though there is earth enough for plants, yet they are so thin sown, that hardly two hundred could be found on an acre of ground. Trees are also very rare on that spot, and these poor, meagre, and cancerous. The stones I found there are all fit for making lime.

We from thence took the route that should carry us to our pettyauger, a journey but of a few days. We drew the pettyauger out of the water, and there pass'd the night. Next

day we crossed the *Mississipi*; in going up which we killed a she-bear, with her cubs : For during the winter, the banks of the *Mississipi* are lined with them ; and it is rare, in going up the river, not to see many cross it in a day, in search of food ; the want of which makes them quit the banks.

I continued my route in going up the *Mississipi* quite to the *Cbicafaw Cliffs*, (*Ecores à Prud'homme*) where I was told I should find something for the benefit of the colony : This was what excited my curiosity.

Being arrived at those cliffs we landed, and concealed, after unlading it, the pettyauger, in the water ; and from that day I sought, and at length found the iron-mine, of which I had had some hints given me. After being sure of this, I carefully searched all around, to find *cassine* ; But this was impossible : However, I believe it may be found higher up, in ascending the *Mississipi*, but that care I leave to those who hereafter shall choose to undertake the working that mine : I had, however, some amends made me for my trouble ; as in searching, I found some marks of pit-coal in the neighbourhood, a thing at least as useful in other parts of the colony as in this.

After

After having made my reflections, I resolved in a little time to return home; but being loth to leave so fine a country, I penetrated a little farther into it; and in this short excursion I espied a small hill, all bare and parched, having on its top only two trees in a very drooping condition, and scarce any grass, besides some litt'e tufts, distant enough asunder, which grew on a very firm clay. The bottom of this hill was not so barren, and the adjacent country fertile as in other parts. These indications made me presume there might be a mine in that spot.

I at length returned towards the *Mississipi*, in order to meet again the pettyauger. As in all this country, and in all the height of the colony we find numbers of buffaloes, elk, deer, and other game; so we find numbers of wolves, some tigers, *Cat-a-mounts*, (*Pichous* and carrion-crows, all of them carnivorous animals, which I shall hereafter describe. When we came near the *Mississipi* we made the signal of recognition, which was answered, tho' at some distance. It was there my people killed some buffaloes, to be dressed and cured in their manner, for our journey. We embarked at length, and went down the *Mississipi*, till we came within a

M 4

league

league of the common landing-place. The *Indians* hid the pettyauger, and went home to their village. As for myself, I got home towards dusk, where I found my neighbours and slaves surprized, and at the same time glad, at my unexpected return, as if it had been from a hunting match in the neighbourhood.

I was really well pleased to have got home, to see my slaves all in perfect health, and all my affairs in good order : But I was strongly impressed with the beauties of the countries I had seen. I could have wished to end my days in those charming solitudes, at a distance from the tumultuous hurry of the world, far from the pinching gripe of avarice and deceit. There it is, said I to myself, one relishes a thousand innocent delights, and which are repeated with a satisfaction ever new. It is there one lives exempt from the assaults of censure, detraction, and calumny. In those delightful meadows, which often extend far out of sight, and where we see so many different species of animals, there it is we have occasion to admire the beneficence of the Creator. To conclude, there it is, that at the gentle purling of a pure and living water, and enchanted with the con-

certs

certs of birds, which fill the neighbouring thickets, we may agreeably contemplate the wonders of nature, and examine them all at our leisure.

I had reasons for concealing my journey, and stronger reasons still to suppress what I had discovered, in order to avail myself thereof afterwards : But the crosses I underwent, and the misfortunes of my life, have, to this day, prevented me from profiting by these discoveries, in returning to that charming country, and even so much as to lay them before the publick.

*Of the Nature of the Lands of Louisiana.  
The Lands on the Coast.*

**I**N order to describe the nature of this country, with some method, I shall first speak of the place we land at, and shall therefore begin with the coast; I shall then go up the *Mississippi*; the reverse of what I did in the Geographical description, in which I described that river from its source down to its mouth,

The coast, which was the first inhabited, extends from *Rio Perdido* to the lake of *St. Louis*: This ground is a very fine sand, white as snow, and so dry, as not to be fit to produce any thing but pine, cedar, and some ever-green oaks.

The river *Mobile* is the most considerable of that coast to the East \*. It rolls its waters over a pure sand, which cannot make it muddy. But if this water is clear, it partakes of the sterility of its bottom, so that it is far from abounding so much in fish as the *Mississippi*. Its banks and neighbourhood are not

\* This river, which they call *Mobile*, and which after the rains of winter is a fine river in spring, is but a brook in summer, especially towards its source. *Dumont*, II. 228.

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very fertile from its source down to the sea. The ground is stoney, and scarce any thing but gravel, mixt with a little earth. Tho' these lands are not quite barren, there is a wide difference between their productions and those of the lands in the neighbourhood of the *Mississipi*. Mountains there are, but whether stone fit for building I know not.

In the confines of the river of the *Alabama* (*Creeks*,) the lands are better: The river falls into the *Mobile*, above the bay of the same name. This bay may be about thirty leagues in length, after having received the *Mobile*, which runs from North to South for about one hundred and fifty leagues. On the banks of this river was the first settlement of the *French* in *Louisiana*, which stood till *New-Orleans* was founded, which is at this day the capital of the colony.

The lands and water of the *Mobile* are not only unfruitful in all kinds of vegetables, and fish, but the nature of the waters and of the soil, contributes also to prevent the multiplication of animals; even women have experienced this. I understood by *Madam Hubert*, whose husband was at my arrival Commissary Director of the colony, that in the time the *French* were in that post, there



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were seven or eight barren women, who all became fruitful, after settling with their husbands on the banks of the *Mississipi*, where the capital was built, and whither the settlement was removed.

Fort *St. Louis* of *Mobile* was the *French* post. This fort stands on the banks of that river, near another small river, called *Dog River*, which falls into the bay to the South of the fort.

Tho' these countries are not so fertile, as those in the neighbourhood of the *Mississipi*; we are, however, to observe, that the interior parts of the country are much better than those near the sea.

On the coast to the West of *Mobile*, we find islands not worth mentioning.

From the sources of the river of the *Paskagoulas*, quite to those of the river of *Quefonsat*, which falls into the lake *St. Louis*, the lands are light and fertile, but something gravelly, on account of the neighbourhood of the mountains, that lye to the North. This country is intermixt with extensive hills, fine meadows, numbers of thickets, and sometimes with woods, thick set with cane, particularly on the banks of rivers and brooks; and is extremely proper for agriculture.

The

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The mountains which I said these countries have to the North, form nearly the figure of a chaplet, with one end pretty near the *Mississipi*, the other on the banks of the *Mobile*. The inner part of this chaplet or chain is filled with hills; which are pretty fertile in grass, simples, fruits of the country, horse-chestnuts, and wild-chestnuts, as large and at least as good as those of *Eyens*.

To the North of this chain of mountains lies the country of the *Chicasaws*, very fine and free of mountains: it has only very extensive and gentle eminences, or rising grounds, fertile groves and meadows, which in spring-time are all over red, from the great plenty of wood-strawberries: In Summer, the plains exhibit the most beautiful enamel, by the quantity and variety of the flowers: In Autumn, after the setting fire to the grass, they are covered with mushrooms.

All the countries I have just mentioned are stored with game of every kind. The buffalo is found on the most rising grounds; the partridge in thick open woods, such as the groves in meadows; the elks delight in large forests, as also the pheasant; the deer, which is a roving animal, is every where to be

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be met with, because in whatever place it may happen to be, it always has something to browse on. The ring-dove here flies in winter with such rapidity, as to pass over a great deal of country in a few hours; ducks and other aquatick game are in such numbers, that wherever there is water, we are sure to find many more than it is possible for us to shoot, were we to do nothing else; and thus we find game in every place, and fish in plenty in the rivers.

Let us resume the coast; which, though flat and dry, on account of its sand, abounds with delicious fish, and excellent shell-fish. But the crystal sand which is pernicious to the sight by its whiteness, might it not be adapted for making some beautiful composition or manufacture? Here I leave the learned to find out, what use this sand may be of.

If this coast is flat, it has in this respect an advantage; as we might say, Nature wanted to make it so, in order to be self defended against the descent of an enemy.

Coming out of the bay of *Paska-Ogoulas*, if we still proceed West, we meet in our way with the bay of *Old Bilaxi*, where a fort was built, and a settlement begun; but a great

great fire, spread by a violent wind, destroyed it in a few moments; which in prudence ought never to have been built at all.

Those, who settled *Off Biloxi*, could not, doubtless, think of quitting the sea-coast. They settled to the West, close to *New Biloxi*, on a land equally dry and pernicious to the sight. In this place, the large grants happened to be laid off, which were extremely inconvenient to have been made on so barren a soil; where it was impossible to find the least plant or greens for any money, and where the hired servants died with hunger in the most fertile colony in the whole world.

In pursuing the same route and the same coast Westward, the lands are still the same, quite to the small bay of *St. Louis*, and to the *Channels*, which lead to the lake of that name. At a distance from the sea the earth is of a good quality, fit for agriculture; as being a light soil, but something gravelly. The coast to the North of the bay of *St. Louis* is of a different nature, and much more fertile. The lands at a greater distance to the North of this last coast, are not very distant from the *Mississipi*; they are also much more

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more fruitful than those to the East of this bay in the same latitude.

In order to follow the sea-coast down to the mouth of the *Mississipi*, we must proceed almost South, quitting the *Channels*. I have elsewhere mentioned, that we have to pass between *Cat-Island*, which we leave to the left, and *Cackle-Island*, which we leave to the right. In making this ideal route, we pass over banks, almost level with the water, covered with a vast number of islets; we leave to the left the *Candlemas-Isles*, which are only heaps of sand, having the form of a gut, cut in pieces; they rise but little above the sea, and scarcely yield a dozen of plants, just as in the neighbouring islets, I have now mentioned. We leave to the right lake *Borgne*, which is another outlet of the lake *St. Louis*, and continuing the same route, by several islets, for a considerable way, we find a little open clear sea, and the coast to the right, which is but a quagmire, gradually formed by a very soft ooze, on which some reeds grow. This coast leads soon to the East pass or channel, which is one of the mouths of the *Mississipi*, and this we find bordered with a like soil, if indeed it deserves the name of soil.

There

There is, moreover, the South-east pass, where stands *Balise*, and the South pass, which projects farther into the sea. *Balise* is a fort built on an island of sand, secured by a great number of piles bound with good timber-work. There are lodgings in it for the officers and the garrison; and a sufficient number of guns for defending the entrance of the *Mississipi*. It is there they take the bar-pilot on board, in order to bring the ships into the river. All the passes and entrances of the *Mississipi*, are as frightful to the eye, as the interior part of the colony is delightful to it.

The quagmires continue still for about seven leagues going up the *Mississipi*, at the entrance of which we meet a bar, three fourths of a league broad: which we cannot pass without the bar-pilot, who alone is acquainted with the channel.

All the West coast resembles that which I mentioned, from *Mobile* to the bay of *St. Louis*; it is equally flat, formed of a like sand, and a bar of isles, which lengthen out the coast, and hinder a descent; the coast continues thus, going Westward, quite to *Ascension* bay, and even a little farther. Its soil

soil also is barren, and in every respect like to that I have just mentioned.

I again enter the *Mississipi*, and pass with speed over these quagmires, incapable to bear up the traveller, and which only afford a retreat to gnats and mosquitoes, and to some water-fowl, which, doubtless, find food to live on, and that in security.

On coming out of these marshes, we find a neck of land on each side of the *Mississipi*; this indeed is firm land, but lined with marshes, resembling those at the entrance of the river. For the space of three or four leagues, this neck of land is at first bare of trees, but comes after to be covered with them, so as to intercept the winds, which the ships require, in order to go up the river, to the capital. This land, tho' very narrow, is continued, together with the trees it bears, quite to the *English Reach*, which is defended by two forts; one to the right, the other to the left of the *Mississipi*.

The origin of the name, *English Reach*, (*Detour aux Anglois*) is differently assigned. I made enquiry of the oldest of the country, to what circumstance this Reach might owe its name. And they told me, that before the first settlement of the *French* in this colony,



lory, the *English*, having heard of the beauty of the country, which they had, doubtless, visited before, in going thither from *Carolina* by land, attempted to make themselves masters of the entrance of the *Mississipi*, and to go up the river, in order to fortify themselves on the first firm ground they could meet. Excited by that jealousy, which is natural to them, they took such precautions, as they imagined to be proper, in order to succeed.

The *Indians* on their part, who had already seen or heard of several people (*French*) having gone up and down the *Mississipi* at different times; the *Indians* I say, who, perhaps, were not so well pleased with such neighbours, were still more frightened at seeing a ship enter the river, which determined them to stop its passage; but this was impossible, as long as the *English* had any wind, of which they availed themselves quite to this Reach. These *Indians* were the *Ouachas* and *Chaouachas*, who dwelt to the West of the *Mississipi*, and below this Reach. There were of them on each side of the river, and they lying in the canes, observed the *English*, and followed them as they went up, without daring to attack them.

When the *English* were come to the entrance of this Reach, the little wind, they had,

had, failed them; observing, besides, that the *Mississipi* made a great turn or winding, they despaired of succeeding; and wanted to moor in this spot, for which purpose they must bring a rope to land: But the *Indians* shot a great number of arrows at them, till the report of a cannon, fired at random, scattered them, and gave the signal to the *English* to go on board, for fear the *Indians* should come in greater numbers, and cut them to pieces.

Such is the origin of the name of this Reach. The *Mississipi* in this place forms the figure of a crescent, almost closed; so that the same wind which brings up a ship, proves often contrary, when come to the Reach: And this is the reason that ships moor, and go up towed, or tacking. This Reach is six or seven leagues, some assign it eight, more or less, according as they happen to make way.

The lands, on both sides of this Reach, are inhabited, tho' the depth of soil is inconsiderable. Immediately above this Reach stands *New Orleans*, the capital of this colony, on the east of the *Mississipi*. A league behind the town, directly back from the river, we meet with a *Bayou* or creek, which can bear large boats with oars. In following this

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this *Bayou* for the space of a league, we go to the lake *St. Louis*, and after traversing obliquely this last, we meet the *Channels*, which lead to *Mobile*, where I began my description of the nature of the soil of *Louisiana*.

The ground on which *New Orleans* is situated, being an earth accumulated by the ooze, in the same manner as is that both below and above, a good way from the capital, is of a good quality for agriculture, only that it is strong, and rather too fat. This land being flat, and drowned by the inundations for several ages, cannot fail to be kept in moisture, there being, moreover, only a mole or bank to prevent the river from overflowing it; and would be even too moist, and incapable of cultivation, had not this mole been made, and ditches, close to each other, to facilitate the draining off the waters: By this means it has been put in a condition to be cultivated with success.

From *New Orleans* to *Manchac* on the east of the *Mississipi*, twenty-five leagues above the capital, and quite to the fork to the west, almost over-against *Manchac*, and a little way off, the lands are of the same kind and quality with those of *New Orleans*.

CHAP.

## C H H P. IV.

*Quality of the lands above the Fork. A  
Quarry of Stone for building. High  
lands to the East: Their vast fertility.  
West coast: West lands: Saltpetre.*

**T**O the west, above the *Fork*, the lands are pretty flat, but exempt from inundations. The part best known of these lands is called *Baya-Ogoula*, a name framed of *Bayou* and *Ogoula*, which signifies the nation dwelling near the *Bayou*; there having been a nation of that name in that place, when the first *Frenchmen* came down the *Mississipi*; it lies twenty-five leagues from the capital.

But to the east, the lands are a good deal higher, seeing from *Manchac* to the river *Wabache* they are between an hundred and two hundred feet higher than the *Mississipi* in its greatest floods. The slope of these lands goes off perpendicularly from the *Mississipi*, which on that side receives but few rivers, and those very small, if we except the river of the *Tasaus*, whose course is not above fifty leagues.

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All these high lands, are, besides, surmounted, in a good many places, by little eminences, or small hills, and rising grounds running off lengthwise, with gentle slopes. It is only when we go a little way from the *Mississipi*, that we find these high lands are over-topped by little mountains, which appear to be all of earth, tho' steep, without the least gravel or pebble being perceived on them.

The soil on these high lands is very good ; it is a black light mold, about three feet deep on the hills or rising grounds. This upper earth lies upon a reddish clay, very strong and stiff; the lowest places between these hills are of the same nature, but there the black earth is between five and six feet deep. The grass growing in the hollows is of the height of a man, and very slender and fine ; whereas the grass of the same meadow on the high lands rises scarce knee deep ; as it does on the highest eminences, unless there is found something underneath, which not only renders the grass shorter, but even prevents its growth by the efficacy of some exhalations ; which is not ordinarily the case on hills, tho' rising high, but only on the mountains properly so called.

My

My experience in Architecture having taught me, that several quarries have been found under a clay like this, I was always of opinion, there must be some in those hills.

Since I made these reflections, I have had occasion, in my journey to the country, to confirm these conjectures. We had set up our hut at the foot of an eminence, which was steep towards us, and near a fountain, whose water was lukewarm and pure.

This fountain appeared to me to issue out of a hole, which was formed by the sinking of the earth. I stooped, in order to take a better view of it, and I observed stone, which to the eye appeared proper for building, and the upper part was this clay, which is peculiar to the country. I was highly pleased to be thus ascertained, that there was stone fit for building in this colony, where it is imagined there is none, because it does not come out of the earth to shew itself.

It is not to be wondered, that there is none to be found in the Lower *Louisiana*, which is only an earth accumulated by ooze; but it is far more extraordinary, not to see a flint, nor even a pebble on the hills, for upwards of an hundred

hundred leagues sometimes ; however, this is a thing common in this province.

I imagine I ought to assign a reason for it, which seems pretty probable to me. This land has never been turned, or dug, and is very close above the clay, which is extremely hard, and covers the stone, which cannot shew itself through such a covering : It is therefore no such surprize, that we observe no stone out of the earth in these plains and on these eminences.

All these high lands are generally meadows and forests of tall trees, with grass up to the knee. Along gullies they prove to be thickets, in which wood of every kind is found, and also the fruits of the country.

Almost all these lands on the east of the river are such as I have described ; that is, the meadows are on those high grounds, whose slope is very gentle ; we also find there tall forests, and thickets in the low bottoms. In the meadows we observe here and there groves of very tall and straight oaks, to the number of fourscore or an hundred at most : There are others of about forty or fifty, which seem to have been planted by men's hands in these meadows, for a retreat to the



buffaloes, deer, and other animals, and a screen against storms, and the sting of the flies.

The tall forests are all hiccory, or all oak : In these last we find a great many morels ; but then there grows a species of mushrooms at the feet of felled walnut-trees, which the *Indians* carefully gather ; I tasted of them, and found them good.

The meadows are not only covered with grass fit for pasture, but produce quantities of wood-strawberries in the month of *April* ; for the following months the prospect is charming, we scarce observe a pile of grass, unless what we tread under-foot ; the flowers, which are then in all their beauty, exhibit to the view the most ravishing sight, being diversified without end ; one in particular I have remarked, which would adorn the most beautiful parterre ; I mean *the Lion's mouth* (*la gueulle de Lion.*)

These meadows afford not only a charming prospect to the eye, they, moreover, plentifully produce excellent simples, (equally with tall woods) as well for the purposes of medicine as of dying. When all these plants are burnt, and a small rain comes on, mushrooms

rooms of an excellent flavour succeed to them; and whiten the surface of the meadows all over.

Those rising meadows and tall forests abound with buffaloes, elk, and deer, with turkeys, partridges, and all kinds of game; consequently wolves, catamounts, and other carnivorous animals are found there; which in following the other animals, destroy and devour such as are too old or too fat; and when the *Indians* go a hunting, these animals are sure to have the offal, or hound's fee, which makes them follow the hunters.

These high lands naturally produce *mulberry-trees*, the leaves of which are very grateful to the *silk-worm*. *Indigo*, in like manner, grows there along the thickets, without culture. There also a native *tobacco* is found growing wild, for the culture of which, as well as for other species of *tobacco*, these lands are extremely well adapted. *Cotton* is also cultivated to advantage: *Wheat* and *flax* thrive better and more easily there, than lower down towards the capital, the land there being too fat; which is the reason that, indeed, oats come there to a greater height than in the lands I am speaking of;

the cotton and the other productions are neither so strong nor so fine there, and the crops of them are often less profitable, tho' the soil be of an excellent nature,

In fine, those high lands to the east of the *Mississipi*, from *Manchar* to the river *Wabache*, may and ought to contain mines: We find in them, just at the surface, iron and pit-coal, but no appearance of silver mines; gold there may be, copper also, and lead.

Let us return to *Manchar*, where I quitted the *Mississipi*; which I will cross, in order to visit the west side, as I have already done the east. I shall begin with the west coast, which resembles that to the east; but is still more dry and barren on the shore. On quitting that coast of white and crystal sand, in order to go northward, we meet five or six lakes, which communicate with one another, and which are, doubtless, remains of the sea. Between these lakes and the *Mississipi*, is an earth accumulated on the sand, and formed by the ooze of that river, as I said; between these lakes there is nothing but sand, on which there is so little earth, that the sand-bottom appears to view; so that we find there but little pasture, which  
some

some strayed buffaloes come to eat; and no trees, if we except a hill on the banks of one of these lakes, which is all covered with ever green oaks, fit for ship-building. This spot may be a league in length by half a league in breadth; and was called *Barataria*, because enclosed by these lakes and their outlets, to form almost an island on dry land.

These lakes are stored with monstrous carp, as well for size as for length; which slip out of the *Mississipi* and its muddy stream, when overflowed, in search of clearer water. The quantity of fish in these lakes is very surprizing, especially as they abound with vast numbers of alligators. In the neighbourhood of these lakes there are some petty nations of *Indians*, who partly live on this amphibious animal.

Between these lakes and the banks of the *Mississipi*, there is some thin herbage, and among others, natural hemp, which grows like trees, and very branched. This need not surprize us, as each plant stands very distant from the other: Hereabouts we find little wood, unless when we approach the *Mississipi*.

To the west of these lakes we find excellent lands, covered in many places with open woods of tall trees, thro' which one may easily ride on horseback; and here we find some buffaloes, which only pass through these woods because the pasture under the trees is bitter; and therefore they prefer the grass of the meadows, which lying exposed to the rays of the sun, becomes thereby more favoury.

In going still farther west, we meet much thicker woods, because this country is extremely well watered; we here find numbers of rivers, which fall into the sea; and what contributes to the fertility of this land, is the number of brooks, that fall into these rivers.

This country abounds with deer and other game; buffaloes are rare; but it promises great riches to such as shall inhabit it, from the excellent quality of its lands. The Spaniards, who bound us on that side, are jealous enough: But the great quantities of land they possess in *America*, have made them lose sight of settling there, tho' acquainted therewith before us: However, they took some steps to traverse our designs, when they saw, we had some thoughts

thoughts that way. But they are not settled there as yet; and who could hinder us from making advantageous settlements in that country.

I resume the banks of the *Mississipi*, above the lakes, and the lands above the fork, which, as I have sufficiently acquainted the reader, are none of the best; and I go up to the North, in order to follow the same method, I observed in describing the nature of the lands to the East.

The banks of the *Mississipi* are of a fat and strong soil; but far less subject to inundations than the lands of the East. If we proceed a little way westward, we meet land gradually rising, and of an excellent quality; and even meadows, which we might well affirm to be boundless, if they were not intersected by little groves. These meadows are covered with buffaloes and other game, which live there so much the more peaceably, as they are neither hunted by men, who never frequent those countries; nor disquieted by wolves, or tigers, which keep more to the North.

The country I have just described is such as I have represented it, till we come to *New-Mexico*: it rises gently enough, near the

*Red-River*, which bounds it to the North, till we reach a high land, which was no more than five or six leagues in breadth, and in certain places only a league; it is almost flat, having but some eminences at some considerable distance from each other: We also meet some mountains of a middling height, which appear to contain something more than bare stone.

This high land begins at some leagues from the *Mississipi*, and continues so quite to *New-Mexico*; it lowers towards the *Red-River*, by windings, where it is diversified alternately with meadows and woods. The top of this height, on the contrary, has scarce any wood. A fine grass grows between the stones, which are common there. The buffaloes come to feed on this grass, when the rains drive them out of the plains; otherwise they go but little thither, because they find there neither water, nor salt-petre.

We are to remark, by the bye, that all cloven-footed animals are extremely fond of salt, and that *Louisiana* in general contains a great deal of saltpetre. And thus we are not to wonder, if the buffalo, the elk, and the deer, have a greater inclination to some certain places than to others, tho' they are there  
often



often hunted. We ought therefore to conclude, that there is more saltpetre in those places, than in such as they haunt but rarely. This is what made me remark, that these animals after their ordinary repast, fail but rarely to go to the torrents, where the earth is cut, and even to the clay; which they lick, especially after rain, because they there find a taste of salt, which allures them thither. Most of those, who have made this remark, imagine, that these animals eat the earth; whereas in such places they only go in quest of the salt, which to them is so strong an allurements, as to make them bid defiance to dangers, in order to get at it.

## CHAP. V.

*Quality of the Lands of the Red River.*

*Posts of Nachitoches. A Silver-mine.*

*Lands of the Black River.*

**T**HE Banks of the *Red River*, towards its confluence, are pretty low, and sometimes drowned by the inundations of the *Missipi*; but above all, the North side, which is but a marshy land for upwards of ten leagues, in going up to the *Nachitoches*, till we come to the *Black River*, which falls into the *Red*. This last takes its name from the colour of its sand, which is red in several places: It is also called the *Marne*, a name given it by some Geographers, but unknown in the country. Some call it the *River of the Nachitoches*, because they dwell on its banks: But the appellation, *Red River*, has remained to it.

Between the *Black River* and the *Red River* the soil is but very light, and even sandy, where we find more firs than other trees; we also observe therein some marshes. But these lands, tho' not altogether barren, if cultivated, would be none of the best. They continue

time such along the banks of the river, only to the rapid part of it, thirty leagues from the *Mississipi*. This rapid part cannot justly be called a fall; however, we can scarce go up with oars, when laden, but must land and tow. I imagine, if the waterman's pole was used, as on the *Loire* and other rivers in *France*, this obstacle would be easily surmounted.

The South side of this river, quite to the rapid part, is entirely different from the opposite side: It is something higher, and rises in proportion as it approaches to the height I have mentioned; the quality is also very different. This land is good and light, appears disposed to receive all the culture imaginable, in which we may assuredly hope to succeed. It naturally produces beautiful fruit trees and vines in plenty; it was on that side muscadine grapes were found. The back parts have neater woods, and the meadows intersected with tall forests. On that side the fruit trees of the country are common, above all, the hickory and walnut-trees, which are sure indications of a good soil.

From the rapid part to the *Nachitoches*, the lands on both sides of this river sufficiently

resemble those I have just mentioned. To the left, in going up, there is a petty nation, called the *Aucelles*; and known only for the services they have done the Colony by the horses, oxen, and cows they have brought from *New Mexico* for the service of the *French* in *Louisiana*. I am ignorant what view the *Indians* may have in that commerce; but I well know, that notwithstanding the fatigues of the journey, these cattle, one with another, did not come, after deducting all expences, and even from the second hand, but to about two pistoles a-head; whence I ought to presume, that they have them cheap in *New Mexico*. By means of this nation we have in *Louisiana* very beautiful horses, of the species of those of *Old Spain*, which, if managed or trained, people of the first rank might ride. As to the oxen and cows, they are the same as those of *France*, and both are at present very common in *Louisiana*.

The South side conveys into the *Red River* only little brooks. On the North side, and pretty near the *Nachitoches*, there is, as is said, a spring of water very salt, running only four leagues. This spring, as it comes out of the earth, forms a little river, which, during the heats, leaves some salt on its banks. And what

what may render this more credible is, that the country, whence it takes its rise, contains a great deal of mineral salt, which discovers itself by several springs of salt water, and by two salt lakes, of which I shall presently speak. In fine, in going up we come to the *French* fort of the *Nachitoches*, built in an island, formed by the *Red River*.

This island is nothing but sand, and that so fine, that the wind drives it like dust; so that the tobacco attempted to be cultivated there at first was loaded with it. The leaf of the tobacco having a very fine down, easily retains this sand, which the least breath of air diffuses every where; which is the reason, that no more tobacco is raised in this island, but provisions only, as maize, potatoes, pumpions, &c. which cannot be damaged by the sands.

M. de St. Denis commanded at this place, where he insinuated himself into the good graces of the natives in such a manner, that, altho' they prefer death to slavery, or even to the government of a sovereign, however mild, yet twenty or twenty-five nations were so attached to his person, that, forgetting they were born free, they willingly surrendered themselves to him; the people and their Chiefs would all have him for their Grand Chief; so

so that at the least signal, he could put himself at the head of thirty thousand men, drawn out of those nations, which had of their own accord submitted themselves to his orders; and that only by sending them a paper on which he drew the usual hieroglyphics that represent war among them, with a large leg, which denoted himself. This was still the more surprizing, as the greatest part of these people were on the *Spanish* territories, and ought rather to have attached themselves to them, than to the *French*, if it had not been for the personal merits of this Commander.

At the distance of seven leagues from the *French* <sup>Post</sup>, the *Spaniards* have settled one, where they have resided ever since M. de la Motte, Governor of *Louisiana*, agreed to that settlement. I know not by what fatal piece of policy the *Spaniards* were allowed to make this settlement; but I know, that, if it had not been for the *French*, the natives would never have suffered the *Spaniards* to settle in that place.

However, several *French* were allured to this *Spanish* settlement, doubtless imagining, that the rains which come from *Mexico*, rolled and brought gold along with them, which would

would cost nothing but the trouble of picking up. But to what purpose serves this beautiful metal, but to make the people vain and idle among whom it is so common, and to make them neglect the culture of the earth, which constitutes true riches, by the sweets it procures to man, and by the advantages it furnishes to Commerce.

Above the *Nachitoches* dwell the *Cadodaguiques*, whose scattered villages assume different names. Pretty near one of these villages was discovered a silver-mine, which was found to be rich, and of a very pure metal. I have seen the assay of it, and its ore is very fine. This silver lies concealed in small invisible particles, in a stone of a chesnut colour, which is spongy, pretty light, and easily calcinable. However, it yields a great deal more than it promises to the eye. The assay of this ore was made by a *Portuguese*, who had worked at the mines of *New Mexico*, whence he made his escape. He appeared to be master of his business, and afterwards visited other mines farther North, but he ever gave the preference to that of the *Red River*.

This river, according to the *Spaniards*, takes its rise in 32 degrees of North latitude; runs about fifty leagues North-east; forms a  
great



great elbow, or winding to the East; then proceeding thence South-east, at which place we begin to know it, it comes and falls into the *Mississipi*, about 31° and odd minutes.

I said above, that the *Black River* discharges itself into the *Red*, ten leagues above the confluence of this last with the *Mississipi*: We now proceed to resume that river, and follow its course, after having observed, that the fish of all those rivers, which communicate with the *Mississipi*, are the same as to species, but far better in the *Red* and *Black Rivers*, because their water is clearer and better than that of the *Mississipi*, which they always quit with pleasure. Their delicate and finer flavour may also arise from the nourishment they take in those rivers.

The lands, of which we are going to speak, are to the North of the *Red River*. They may be distinguished into two parts; which are to the right and left of the *Black River*, in going up to its source, and even as far as the river of the *Arkansas*. It is called the *Black River*, because its depth gives it that colour, which is, moreover, heightened by the woods which line it throughout the Colony. All the rivers have their banks covered with woods; but this river, which is very narrow,

is almost quite covered by the branches, and rendered of a dark colour on the first view. It is sometimes called the river of the *Wachitas*, because its banks were occupied by a nation of that name, who are now extinct. I shall continue to call it by its usual name.

The lands which we directly find on both sides, are low, and continue thus for the space of three or four leagues, till we come to the river of the *Taensas*, thus denominated from a nation of that name, which dwelt on its banks. This river of the *Taensas* is properly speaking but a channel formed by the overflowings of the *Mississipi*, has its course almost parallel thereto, and separates the low lands from the higher. The lands between the *Mississipi* and the river of the *Taensas* are the same as in the Lower *Louisiana*.

The lands we find in going up the *Black River* are nearly the same, as well for the nature of the soil, as for their good qualities. They are rising grounds, extending in length, and which in general may be considered as one very extensive meadow, diversified with little groves, and cut only by the *Black River* and little brooks, bordered with wood up to their sources. Buffaloes and deer are seen in whole herds there. In approaching to the river

ver of the *Arkansas*, deer and pheasants begin to be very common; and the same species of game is found there, as is to the East of the *Mississipi*; in like manner wood-strawberries, sumplea, flowers, and mushrooms. The only difference is, that this side of the *Mississipi* is more level, there being no lands so high and so very different from the rest of the country. The woods are like those to the East of the *Mississipi*, except that to the West there are more walnut and hiccory trees. These last are another species of walnut, the nuts of which are more tender, and invite to these parts a greater number of parrots. What we have just said, holds in general of this West side; let us now consider what is peculiar thereto.

## CHAP. VI.

*A brook of salt-water : Salt lakes. Land of the river of the Arkansas. Red veined marble : Slate : Plaster. Hunting the buffalo. The dry sand-banks in the Mississipi.*

**A**FTER we have gone up the *Black River* about thirty leagues, we find to the left a brook of salt water, which comes from the West. In going up this brook about two leagues, we meet with a lake of salt water, which may be two leagues in length, by one in breadth. A league higher up to the North, we meet another lake of salt water, almost as long and broad as the former.

This water, doubtless, passes through some mines of salt ; it has the taste of salt, without that bitterness of the sea-water. The *Indians* come a great way off to this place, to hunt in winter, and make salt. Before the *French* trucked coppers with them, they made upon the spot pots of earth for this operation : And they returned home, loaded with salt and dry provisions.

To

To the East of the *Black River* we observe nothing that indicates mines ; but to the West one might affirm there should be some, from certain marks, which might well deceive pretended connoisseurs. As for my part, I would not warrant that there were two mines in that part of the country, which seems to promise them. I should rather be led to believe, that they are mines of salt, at no great depth from the surface of the earth, which, by their volatile and acid spirits prevent the growth of plants in those spots.

Ten or twelve leagues above this brook, is a creek, near which those *Natchez* retreated, who escaped being made slaves with the rest of their nation, when the Messrs *Perier* extirpated them on the East side of the river, by order of the Court.

The *Black River* takes its rise to the Northwest of its confluence, and pretty near the river of the *Arkansas*, into which falls a branch from this rise or source ; by means of which we may have a communication from the one to the other with a middling carriage. This communication with the river of the *Arkansas* is upwards of an hundred leagues from the Post of that name. In other respects, this *Black River* might carry a boat throughout, if cleared

cleared of the wood fallen into its bed, which generally traverses it from one side to the other. It receives some brooks, and abounds in excellent fish, and in alligators.

I make no doubt but these lands are very fit to bear and produce every thing that can be cultivated with success on the East of the *Mississipi*, opposite to this side, except the canton or quarter between the river of the *Tanensas* and the *Mississipi*; that land being subject to inundations, would be proper only for rice.

I imagine we may now pass on to the North of the river of the *Arkansas*, which takes its rise in the mountains adjoining to the East of *Santa Fé*. It afterwards goes up a little to the North, from whence it comes down to the South, a little lower than its source. In this manner it forms a line parallel almost with the *Red River*.

That river has a cataract, or fall, at about an hundred and fifty leagues from its confluence. Before we come to this fall, we find a quarry of red-veined marble, one of slate, and one of plaster. Some travellers have there observed grains of gold in a little brook: But as they happened to be going in quest of a rock of emeralds, they deigned not to amuse themselves with picking up particles of gold.

This

This river of the *Arkansas* is stored with fish; has a great deal of water; having a course of two hundred and fifty leagues, and can carry large boats quite to the cataract. Its banks are covered with woods, as are all the other rivers of the country. In its course it receives several brooks, or rivulets, of little consequence, unless we except that called the *White River*, and which discharges itself into the curve or elbow of that we are speaking of, and below its fall.

In the whole tract North of this river, we find plains that extend out of sight, which are vast meadows, intersected by groves, at no great distance from one another, which are all tall woods, where we might easily hunt the stag; great numbers of which, as also of buffaloes, are found here. Deer also are very common.

From having seen those animals frightened at the least noise, especially at the report of a gun, I have thought of a method to hunt them, in the manner the *Spaniards* of *New Mexico* do, which would not scare them at all, and which would turn to the great advantage of the inhabitants, who have this game in plenty in their country. This hunting might be set about in winter, from the beginning

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ginning of *October*, when the meadows are burnt, till the month of *February*.

This hunting is neither expensive nor fatiguing: Horses are had very cheap in that country, and maintained almost for nothing. Each hunter is mounted on horseback, and armed with a crescent somewhat open, whose inside should be pretty sharp; the top of the outside to have a socket, to put in a handle: Then a number of people on horseback to go in quest of a herd of buffaloes, and always attack them with the wind in their backs. As soon as they smell a man, it is true, they run away; but at the sight of the horses they will moderate their fears, and thus not precipitate their flight; whereas the report of a gun frightens them so as to make them run at full speed. In this chase, the lightest would run fast enough; but the oldest, and even the young of two or three years old, are so fat, that their weight would make them soon be overtaken: Then the armed hunter may strike the buffalo with his crescent above each ham, and cut his tendons; after which he is easily mastered. Such as never saw a buffalo, will hardly believe the quantity of fat they yield: But it ought to be considered, that, continuing day and night in plentiful pastures

pastures of the finest and most delicious grass, they must soon fatten, and that from their youth. Of this we have an instance in a bull at the *Natchez*, which was kept till he was two years old, and grew so fat, that he could not leap on a cow, from his great weight ; so that we were obliged to kill him, and got nigh an hundred and fifty pounds of tallow from him. His neck was near as big as his body.

From what I have said, it may be judged, what profit such hunters might make of the skins and tallow of those buffaloes ; the hides would be large, and their wool would be still an additional benefit. I may add, that this hunting of them would not diminish the species, those fat buffaloes being ordinarily the prey of wolves, as being too heavy to be able to defend themselves.

Besides, the wolves would not find their account in attacking them in herds. It is well known, that the buffaloes range themselves in a ring, the strongest without, and the weakest within. The strong, standing pretty close together, present their horns to the enemy, who dare not attack them in this disposition. But wolves, like all other animals, have their particular instinct, in order to procure their necessary food. They come

so near, that the buffaloes smell them some way off, which makes them run for it. The wolves then advance with a pretty equal pace, till they observe the fattest out of breath. These they attack before and behind; one of them seizes on the buffalo by the hind-quarter, and overturns him, the others strangle him.

The wolves being many in a body, kill not what is sufficient for one alone, but as many as they can, before they begin to eat. For this is the manner of the wolf, to kill ten or twenty times more than he needs, especially when he can do it with ease, and without interruption.

Though the country I describe has very extensive plains, I pretend not to say, that there are no rising grounds or hills; but they are more rare there than elsewhere, especially on the West side. In approaching to *New Mexico*, we observe great hills and some mountains, some of which are pretty high.

I ought not to omit mentioning here, that from the low lands of *Louisiana*, the *Mississippi* has several shoal banks of sand in it,

which appear very dry upon the falling of the waters, after the inundations. These banks extend more or less in length; some of them half a league, and not without a considerable breadth. I have seen the *Natchez*, and other *Indians*, sow a sort of grain, which they called *Choupichoul*, on these dry sand-banks. This sand received no manner of culture; and the women and children covered the grain any how with their feet, without taking any great pains about it. After this sowing, and manner of culture, they waited till Autumn, when they gathered a great quantity of the grain. It was prepared like millet, and very good to eat. This plant is what is called *Belle Dame Sauvage*\*, which thrives in all countries, but requires a good soil: And whatever good quality the soil in *Europe* may have, it shoots but a foot and a half high; and yet, on this sand of the *Mississipi*, it rises, without any culture, three feet and a half, and four feet high. Such is the virtue of this sand all up the *Mississipi*; or, to speak more properly, for the whole length of its course; if we except the accumulated earth of the *Lower Louisiana*, across which it passes, and where it

\* He seems to mean *Buck-wheat*.

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cannot leave any dry sand-banks ; because it is straitened within its banks, which the river itself raises, and continually augments.

In all the groves and little forests I have mentioned, and which lie to the North of the river of the *Arkansas*, pheasants, partridges, snipes, and woodcocks, are in such great numbers, that those who are most fond of this game, might easily satisfy their longing, as also every other species of game. Small birds are still vastly more numerous.

## C H A P. VII.

*The Lands of the River St. Francis.  
 Mine of Marameg, and other Mines.  
 A Lead-mine. A soft Stone, resembling  
 Porphyry. Lands of the Mis-  
 souri. The Lands North of the Wa-  
 bache. The Lands of the Illinois. De  
 la Mothe's Mine, and other Mines.*

**T**HIRTY leagues above the river of  
 the *Arkansas*, to the North, and on the  
 same side of the *Mississipi*, we find the river  
*St. Francis*.

The lands adjoining to it are always covered with herds of buffaloes, notwithstanding they are hunted every winter in those parts: For, it is to this river, that is, in its neighbourhood, that the *French* and *Canadians* go and make their salt provisions for the inhabitants of the Capital, and of the neighbouring plantations, in which they are assisted by the native *Arkansas*, whom they hire for that purpose. When they are upon the spot, they chuse a tree, fit to make a pettyauger, which serves for a salting or powdering-tub in the middle, and is closed

at

at the two ends, where only is left room for a man at each extremity.

The trees they choose are ordinarily the poplar, which grow on the banks of the water. It is a white wood, soft and binding. The pettyaugers might be made of other wood, because such are to be had pretty large; but either too heavy for pettyaugers, or too apt to split.

The species of wood in this part of *Louisiana* is tall oak; the fields abound with four sorts of walnut, especially the black kind; so called, because it is of a dark brown colour, bordering on black; this sort grows very large.

There are, besides, fruit trees in this country, and it is there we begin to find commonly *Papaws*. We have also here other trees of every species, more or less, according as the soil is favourable. These lands in general are fit to produce every thing the low lands can yield, except rice and indigo. But in return, wheat thrives there extremely well: The vine is found every where; the mulberry tree is in plenty; tobacco grows fine, and of a good quality; as do cotton and garden plants: So that by leading



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ing an easy and agreeable life in that country, we may at the same time be sure of a good return to *France*.

The land which lies between the *Mississipi* and the river *St. Francis*, is full of rising grounds, and mountains of a middling height, which, according to the ordinary indications, contain several mines : Some of them have been assayed, among the rest, the mine of *Marameg*, on the little river of that name ; the other mines appear not to be so rich, nor so easy to be worked. There are some lead-mines, and others of copper, as is pretended.

The mine of *Marameg*, which is silver, is pretty near the confluence of the river which gives it name ; which is a great advantage to those who would work it, because they might easily, by that means, have their goods from *Europe*. It is situate about five hundred leagues from the sea.

I shall continue on the West side of the *Mississipi*, and to the North of the famous river of *Missouri*, which we are now to cross. This river takes its rise at eight hundred leagues distance, as is alleged, from the place where it discharges itself into the *Mississipi*.

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*Missipi*. Its waters are muddy, thick, and charged with nitre; and these are the waters that make the *Mississippi* muddy down to the sea, its waters being extremely clear above the confluence of the *Missouri*: The reason is, that the former rolls its waters over a sand and pretty firm soil; the latter, on the contrary, flows across rich and clayey lands, where little stone is to be seen; for tho' the *Missouri* comes out of a mountain, which lies to the North-west of *New Mexico*, we are told, that all the lands it passes thro' are generally rich; that is, low meadows, and lands without stone.

This great river, which seems ready to dispute the preeminence with the *Mississippi*, receives in its long course many rivers and brooks, which considerably augment its waters. But except those, that have received their names from some nation of *Indians*, who inhabit their banks, there are very few of their names we can be well assured of, each traveller giving them different appellations. The *French* having penetrated up the *Missouri* only for about three hundred leagues at most, and the rivers, which fall into its bed being only known by the *Indians*, it is of little importance what names they may

bear at present, being besides in a country but little frequented. The river, which is the best known, is that of the *Osages*, so called from a nation of that name, dwelling on its banks. It falls into the *Missouri*, pretty near its confluence.

The largest known river which falls into the *Missouri*, is that of the *Canzas*; which runs for near two hundred leagues in a very fine country. According to what I have been able to learn about the course of this great river, from its source to the *Canzas*, it runs from West to East; and from that nation it falls down to the Southward, where it receives the river of the *Canzas*, which comes from the West; there it forms a great elbow, which terminates in the neighbourhood of the *Missouris*; then it resumes its course to the South-east, to lose at last both its name and waters in the *Mississipi*, about four leagues lower down than the river of the *Illinois*.

There was a *French* Post for some time in an island a few leagues in length, over against the *Missouris*; the *French* settled in this fort at the East point, and called it *Fort Orleans*. *M. de Bourgmont* commanded there a sufficient time, to gain the friendship of

the

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the *Indians* of the countries adjoining to this great river. He brought about a peace among all those nations, who before his arrival were all at war; the nations to the North being more warlike than those to the South.

After the departure of that Commandant, they murdered all the garrison, not a single *Frenchman* having escaped to carry the news: nor could it be ever known, whether it happened through the fault of the *French*, or through treachery.

As to the nature of that country, I refer to *M. de Bourgmont's Journal*, an extract from which I have given above. That is an original account, signed by all the officers, and several others of the Company, which I thought was too prolix to give at full length, and for that reason I have only extracted from it what relates to the people and the quality of the soil, and traced out the route to those who may have a mind to make that journey; and even this we found necessary to abridge in this translation.

In this journey of *M. de Bourgmont*, mention is only made of what we meet with, from *Fort Orleans*, from which we set out,

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in order to go to the *Padoucas*: Wherefore I ought to speak of a thing curious enough to be related, and which is found on the banks of the *Missouri*; and that is, a pretty high cliff, upright from the edge of the water. From the middle of this cliff juts out a mass of red stone with white spots, like Porphyry, with this difference, that what we are speaking of is almost soft and tender, like sand-stone. It is covered with another sort of stone of no value; the bottom is an earth, like that on other rising grounds. This stone is easily worked, and bears the most violent fire. The *Indians* of the country have contrived to strike off pieces thereof with their arrows, and after they fall in the water plunge for them. When they can procure pieces thereof large enough to make pipes, they fashion them with knives and awls. This pipe has a socket two or three inches long, and on the opposite side the figure of an hatchet; in the middle of all is the boot, or bowl of the pipe, to put the tobacco in. These sort of pipes are highly esteemed among them.

All to the North of the *Missouri* is entirely unknown, unless we will give credit to the relations of different travellers; but  
to

to which of them shall we give the preference? In the first place, they almost all contradict each other: And then, men of the most experience treat them as impostors: And therefore I choose to pay no regard to any of them.

Let us therefore now repass the *Mississipi*, in order to resume the description of the lands to the East, and which we quitted at the river *Wabache*. This river is distant from the sea four hundred and sixty (three hundred) leagues; it is reckoned to have four hundred leagues in length, from its source to its confluence into the *Mississipi*. It is called *Wabache*, though, according to the usual method, it ought to be called the *Ohio*, or beautiful river; seeing the *Ohio* is known under that name in *Canada*, before its confluence was known: And as the *Ohio* takes its rise at a greater distance off than the three others, which mix together, before they empty themselves into the *Mississipi*, this should make the others lose their names; but custom has prevailed on this occasion\*. The first river known to us, which falls into the *Ohio*, is that of the *Michigan*, which takes its rise towards Lake *Erie*.

\* But not among the *English*; we call it the *Ohio*.

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It is by this river of the *Miamis* that the *Canadians* come to *Louisiana*. For this purpose they embark on the river *St. Laurence*, go up this river, pass the cataracts quite to the bottom of *Lake Erié*, where they find a small river, on which they also go up to a place, called the *Carriage of the Miamis*; because that people come and take their effects, and carry them on their backs for two leagues from thence to the banks of the river of their name, which I just said empties itself into the *Ohio*. From thence the *Canadians* go down that river, enter the *Wabache*, and at last the *Mississipi*, which brings them to *New Orleans*, the Capital of *Louisiana*. They reckon eighteen hundred leagues\* from the Capital of *Canada* to that of *Louisiana*, on account of the great turns and windings they are obliged to take.

The river of the *Miamis* is thus the first to the North, which falls into the *Ohio*; then that of the *Chaouanons* to the South; and lastly, that of the *Gherakees*; all which together empty themselves into the *Mississipi*. This is what we call the *Wabache*, and what in *Canada* and *New England* they call the *Ohio*. This river is beautiful, greatly

\* It is but nine hundred leagues.

abounding



abounding in fish, and navigable almost up to its source.

To the North of this river lies *Canada*, which inclines more to the East than the source of the *Ohio*, and extends to the country of the *Illinois*. It is of little importance to dispute here about the limits of these two neighbouring colonies, as they both appertain to *France*. The lands of the *Illinois* are reputed to be a part of *Louisiana*; we have there a Post near a village of that nation, called *Tamarouas*.

The country of the *Illinois* is extremely good, and abounds with buffalo and other game. On the North of the *Wabache* we first begin to see the *Orignaux*; a species of animals which are said to partake of the buffalo and the stag; they have, indeed, been described to me to be much more clumsy than the stag. Their horns have something of the stag, but are shorter and more massy; the meat of them, as they say, is pretty good. Swans, and other water-fowl, are common in these countries.

The *French Post* of the *Illinois* is, of all the colony, that in which, with the greatest

est ease, they grow wheat, rye, and other like grain, for the sowing of which you need only to turn the earth in the slightest manner; that slight culture is sufficient to make the earth produce as much as we can reasonably desire. I have been assured, that in the last war, when the flour from *France* was scarce, the *Illinois* sent down to *New Orleans* upwards of eight hundred thousand weight thereof in one winter. Tobacco also thrives there, but comes to maturity with difficulty. All the plants transported thither from *France* succeed well, as do also the fruits.

In those countries there is a river, which takes its name from the *Illinois*. It was by this river that the first travellers came from *Canada* into the *Mississipi*. Such as come from *Canada*, and have business only on the *Illinois*, pass that way yet: But such as want to go directly to the sea, go down the river of the *Miamis* into the *Wabache*, or *Ohio*, and from thence into the *Mississipi*.

In this country there are mines, and one in particular called *De la M<sup>re</sup>*'s mine, which is silver, the assay of which has been made; as also of two lead-mines, so rich at first,

## OF LOUISIANA. 303

first, as to vegetate, or shoot, a foot and a half at least out of the earth.

The whole continent North of the river of the *Illinois* is not much frequented, consequently little known. The great extent of *Louisiana* makes us presume, that these parts will not soon come to our knowledge, unless some curious person should go thither to open mines, where they are said to be in great numbers, and very rich.

CHAP.

## C H A P. VIII.

*Of the Agriculture, or manner of cultivating, ordering, and manufacturing the Commodities that are proper articles of Commerce. Of the culture of Maiz, Rice, and other fruits of the Country. Of the Silk-worm.*

**I**N order to give an account of the several sorts of plants cultivated in *Louisiana*, I begin with *Maiz*, as being the most useful grain, seeing it is the principal food of the people of *America*, and that the *French* found it cultivated by the *Indians*.

*Maiz*, which in *France* we call *Turkey-corn*, (and we *Indian-corn*) is a grain of the size of a pea; there 's of it as large as our sugar-pea: It grows on a sort of husks, (*Quenouille*) in ascending rows: Some of these husks have, to the number of seven hundred grains upon them, and I have counted even a greater number. This husk may be about two inches thick, by seven or eight inches and upwards in length: It is wrapped up in several covers or thin leaves, which  
screen

screen it from the avidity of birds. Its foot or stalk is often of the same size: It has leaves about two inches and upwards broad, by two feet and a half long, which are chanelled, or formed like gutters, by which they collect the dew which dissolves at sun-rising, and trickles down to the stalk, sometimes in such plenty, as to wet the earth around them for the breadth of six or seven inches. Its flower is on the top of the stalk, which is sometimes eight feet high. We ordinarily find five or six ears on each stalk, and in order to procure a greater crop, the part of the stalk above the ears ought to be cut away.

For sowing the *Maiz* in a field, already cleared and prepared, holes are made four feet asunder every way, observing to make the rows as straight as may be, in order to weed them the easier: Into every hole five or six grains are put, which are previously to be steeped for twenty-four hours at least, to make them rise or shoot the quicker, and to prevent the fox and birds from eating such quantities of them: By day there are people to guard them against birds; by night fires are made at proper distances to frighten away the fox, who would otherwise turn up the

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the ground, and eat the corn of all the rows, one after another, without omitting one, till he has his fill, and is therefore the most pernicious animal to this corn. The corn, as soon as shot out of the earth, is weeded : When it mounts up, and its stalks are an inch big, it is hilled, to secure it against the wind. This grain produces enough for two Negroes to make fifty barrels, each weighing an hundred and fifty pounds.

Such as begin a plantation in woods, thick-set with cane, have an advantage in the *Maiz*, that makes amends for the labour of clearing the ground ; a labour always more fatiguing than cultivating a spot already cleared. The advantage is this : They begin with cutting down the canes for a great extent of ground ; the trees they peel two feet high quite round : This operation is performed in the beginning of *March*, as then the sap is in motion in that country : About fifteen days after, the canes being dry, are set on fire : The sap of the trees are thereby made to descend, and the branches are burnt, which kills the trees.

On the following day they sow the corn in the manner I have just shewn : The roots of the

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the cane, which are not quite dead, shoot fresh canes, which are very tender and brittle; and as no other weeds grow in the field that year, it is easy to be weeded of these canes, and as much corn again may be made, as in a field already cultivated.

This grain they eat in many different ways; the most common way is to make it into *Sagamity*, which is a kind of gruel made with water, or strong broth. They bake bread of it like cakes (by baking it over the fire on an iron plate, or on a board before the fire,) which is much better than what they bake in the oven, at least for present use; but you must make it every day; and even then it is too heavy to soak in soup of any kind. They likewise make *parched meal* \* of it, which is a dish of the natives, as well as the *Cooëdlou*, or bread mixt with beans. The ears of corn roasted are likewise a peculiar dish of theirs; and the small corn dressed in that manner is as agreeable to us as to them. A light and black earth agrees much better with the *Maiz* than a strong and rich one.

\* See Book III. Chap. 1.



The *parched meal* is the the best preparation of this corn ; the *French* like it extremely well, no less than the *Indians* themselves : I can affirm, that it is a very good food, and at the same time the best sort of provision that can be carried on a journey, because it is refreshing and extremely nourishing.

As for the small *Indian* corn, you may see an account of it in the first chapter of the third Book ; where you will likewise find an account of the way of sowing wheat, which if you do not observe, you may as well sow none.

Rice is sown in a soil well laboured, either by the plough or hoe, and in winter, that it may be sowed before the time of the inundation. It is sown in furrows of the breadth of a hoe : When shot, and three or four inches high, they let water into the furrows, but in a small quantity, in proportion as it grows, and then give water in greater plenty.

The ear of this grain nearly resembles that of oats ; its grains are fastened to a beard, and its chaff is very rough and full of those fine and hard beards : The bran adheres not to the grain, as that of the corn of  
France ;

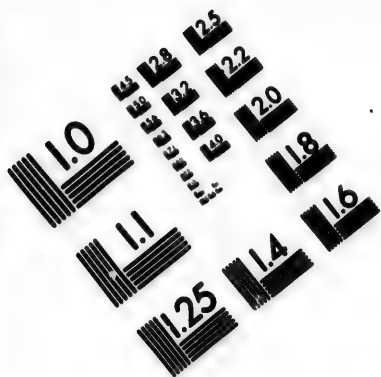
## OF LOUISIANA. 309

*France*; it consists of two lobes, which easily separate and loosen, and are therefore readily cleaned and broke off.

They eat their rice as they do in *France*, but boiled much thicker and with much less cookery, altho' it is not inferior in goodness to ours: They only wash it in warm water, taken out of the same pot you are to boil it in, then throw it in all at once, and boil it, till it bursts, and so it is dressed without any further trouble. They make bread of it, that is very white and of a good rollish; but they have tried in vain to make any that will soak in soup.

The culture of the *Water-melon* is simple enough. They choose for the purpose a light soil, as that of a rising ground, well exposed: They make holes in the earth, from two and a half to three feet in diameter, and distant from each other fifteen feet every way, in each of which holes they put five or six seeds. When the seeds are come up, and the young plants have struck out five or six leaves, the four most thriving plants are pitched upon, and the others plucked up to prevent their starving each other, when too numerous. It is only at that time, that they  
have







have the trouble of watering them, nature alone performing the rest, and bringing them to maturity; which is known by the green find beginning to change colour. There is no occasion to cut or prune them. The other species of melons are cultivated in the same manner, only that between the holes the distance is but five or six feet.

All sorts of garden plants and greens thrive extremely well in *Louisiana*, and grow in much greater abundance than in *France*: The climate is warmer, and the soil much better. However, it is to be observed, that onions and other bulbous plants, answer not in the low-lands, without a great deal of pains and labour; whereas in the high grounds, they grow very large and of a fine flavour.

The inhabitants of *Louisiana* may very easily make *Silk*, having mulberries ready at hand, which grow naturally in the high-lands, and plantations of them may be easily made. The leaves of the natural mulberries of *Louisiana* are what the *Silk-worms* are very fond of; I mean the more common mulberries with a large leaf, but tender, and the fruit of the colour of *Burgundy* wine. The province produces also the white mulberry, which has the same quality with the red.

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I shall next relate some experiments, that have been made on this subject, by people who were acquainted with it. Madam *Hubert*, a native of *Provence*, where they make a great deal of *Silk*, which she understood the management of, was desirous of trying, whether they could raise *Silk-worms* with the mulberry leaves of this province, and what sort of silk they would afford. The first of her experiments was, to give some large silk-worms a parcel of the leaves of the *Red-Mulberry*, and another parcel of the white mulberry both upon the same frame. She observed the worms went over the leaves of both sorts, without shewing any greater liking to the one than to the other: Then she put to the other two sorts of leaves, some of the leaves of the *White-sweet* or *Sugar-Mulberry*, and she found that the worms left the other sorts to go to these, and that they preferred them to the leaves of the common *Red* and *White Mulberry* \*.

The second experiment of Madam *Hubert* was, to raise and feed some silk-worms separately. To some she gave the leaves of the common *White-Mulberry*; and to others the

\* See an account of these different sorts of Mulberry, in the notes at the end of Vol. II.



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leaves of the *White Sugar-Mulberry*; in order to see the difference of the silk from the difference of their food. Moreover, she raised and fed some of the native silk-worms of the country, which were taken very young from the mulberry-trees; but she observed, that these last were very flighty, and did nothing but run up and down, their nature being, without doubt, to live upon trees: She then changed their place, that they might not mix with the other worms that came from *France*, and gave them little branches with the leaves on them, which made them a little more settled.

This industrious lady waited till the cocoons were perfectly made, in order to observe the difference between them in unwinding the silk; the success of which, and of all her other experiments she was so good as to give me a particular account of. When the cocoons were ready to be wound, she took care of them herself, and found, that the wild worms yielded less silk than those from *France*, for altho' they were of a larger size, they were not so well furnished with silk, which proceeded, no doubt, from their not being sufficiently nourished, by their running incessantly up and down; and accordingly she observed

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observed, that they were but meagre ; but notwithstanding, their silk was strong and thick, tho' coarse.

Those that were fed with the leaves of the *Red-Mulberry* made cocoons well furnished with silk ; which was stronger and finer than that of *France*. Those that were fed upon the leaves of the common *White Mulberry*, had the same silk with those that were fed on the leaves of the *Red-Mulberry*. The fourth sort, again, that had been fed with the leaves of the *White Sugar-Mulberry*, had but little silk ; it was indeed as fine as the preceding, but it was so weak, and so brittle, that it was with great difficulty they could wind it.

These are the experiments of this lady on silk-worms, which every one may make his own uses of, in order to have the sorts of silk, mulberries, or worms, that are most suitable to his purpose, and most likely to turn to his account: Which we are very glad of this opportunity to inform them of, that they may see, how much society owes to those persons, who take care to study nature, in order to promote industry and public utility.

## CHAP. IX.

*Of Indigo, Tobacco, Cotton, Wax, Hops,  
and Saffron.*

**T**HE high lands of *Louisiana* produce a natural Indigo : What I saw in two or three places, where I have observed it, grew at the edges of the thick woods, which shews it delights in a good, but light soil. One of these stalks was but ten or twelve inches high, its wood at least three lines in diameter, and of as fine a green as its leaf ; it was as tender as the rib of a cabbage leaf ; when its head was blown a little, the two other stalks shot in a few days, the one seventeen, and the other nineteen inches high ; the stem was six lines thick below, and of a very lively green, and still very tender, the lower part only began to turn brown a little ; the tops of both were equally ill furnished with leaves, and without branches ; which makes it to be presumed, that being so thriving and of so fine a growth, it would have shot very high, and surpass in vigour and height the cultivated *Indigo*. The stalk of the *Indigo*, cultivated by the *French* at the *Natchez*, turned brown before it shot eleven or twelve inches ; when in seed it was  
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five feet high and upwards, and surpassed in vigour what was cultivated in the *Lower Louisiana*, that is, in the quarter about *New Orleans*: but the natural, which I had an opportunity of seeing only young and tender, promised to become much taller and stouter than ours, and to yield more.

The *Indigo* cultivated in *Louisiana*, comes from the Islands; its grain is of the bigness of one line, and about a quarter longer, brown and hard, flatted at the extremities, because it is compressed in its pod. This grain is sown in a soil, prepared like a garden, and the field, where it is cultivated, is called the *Indigo-garden*. In order to sow it, holes are made on a straight line with a small hoe, a foot asunder; in each hole, four or five seeds are put, which are covered with earth; great care is had not to suffer any strange plants to grow near it, which would choak it; and it is sown a foot asunder, to the end it may draw the fuller nourishment, and be weeded without grazing or ruffling the leaf, which is that which gives the *Indigo*. When its leaf is quite come to its shape, it resembles exactly that of the *Acacia*, so well known in *France*, only that it is smaller.

It is cut with large pruning-knives, or a sort of sickles, with about six or seven inches aper-

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ture, which should be pretty strong. It ought to be cut before its wood hardens; and to be green as its leaf, which ought, however, to have a bluish eye, or cast. When cut, it is conveyed into the rotting-tub, as we shall presently explain. According as the soil is better or worse, it shoots higher or lower; the tuft of the first cutting, which grows round, does not exceed eight inches in height and breadth: the second cutting rises sometimes to a foot. In cutting the *Indigo*, you are to set your foot upon the root, in order to prevent the pulling it out of the earth; and to be upon your guard not to cut yourself, as the tool is dangerous.

In order to make an *Indigo-work*, a shed is first of all to be built: this building is at least twenty feet high, without walls or flooring, but only covered. The whole is built upon posts, which may be closed with mats, if you please: this building has twenty feet in breadth, and at least thirty in length. In this shed three vats or large tubs are set in such a manner, that the water may be easily drained off from the first, which is the lowermost and smallest. The second rests with the edge of its bottom on the upper edge of the first, so that the water may easily run from it into the

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one below. This second vat is not broader but deeper than the first, and is called the *Battery*; for this reason it has its beaters, which are little buckets formed of four ends of boards, about eight inches long, which together have the figure of the hopper of a mill; a stick runs across them, which is put into a wooden fork, in order to beat the *Indigo*: there are two of them on each side, which in all make four.

The third vat is placed in the same manner over the second, and is as big again, that it may hold the leaves; it is called the *Rotting-tub*, because the leaves which are put into it are deadened, not corrupted or spoiled therein. The *Indigo-operator*, who conducts the whole work, knows when it is time to let the water run into the second vat; then he lets go the cock; for if the leaves were left too long, the *Indigo* would be too black; it must have no more time than what is sufficient to discharge a kind of flower or froth that is found upon the leaf.

The water, when it is all in the second vat, is beat till the *Indigo-operator* gives orders to cease; which he does not before he has several times taken up some of this water with a silver cup, by way of assay, in order

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to know the exact time in which they ought to give over beating the water : and this is a secret which practice alone can teach with certainty.

When the *Indigo-operator* finds that the water is sufficiently beaten, he lets it settle till he can draw off the water clear ; which is done by means of several cocks one above another, for fear of losing the *Indigo*. For this purpose, if the water is clear, the highest cock is opened, the second in like manner, till the water is observed to be tinged ; then they shut the cock : the same is done in all the cocks till all the *Indigo* be in a pap at the bottom of the second vat. The first, or small vat, serves only to purify the water, which is found to be tinged, and let run while clear.

When the *Indigo* is well settled, they put it in cloth bags, a foot long and six inches wide, with a small circle at top, which helps to receive the *Indigo* with ease ; it is suffered to drain till it gives no more water : however, it must be moist enough to spread it in the mould with a wooden knife, or spatula.

In order to have the feed, they suffer it to run up as many feet as they foresee shall be necessary

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necessary for seed ; it shoots four or five feet high, according to the quality of the soil. There are four cuttings of it in the islands, where the climate is warmer ; three good cuttings are made in *Louisiana*, and of as good a quality at least as in the islands.

*Tobacco*, which was found among the *Indians* of *Louisiana*, seems also to be a native of the country, seeing their ancient tradition informs us, that from time immemorial they have, in their treaties of peace and in their embassies, used the pipe, the principal use of which is that the deputies shall all smoke therein. This native *Tobacco* is very large, its stalk, when suffered to run to seed, shoots to five feet and a half and six feet ; the lower part of its stem is at least eighteen lines in diameter, and its leaves often near two feet long, which are thick and succulent ; its juice is strong, but never disorders the head. The *Tobacco* of *Virginia* has a broader but shorter leaf, its stalk is smaller and runs not up so high ; its smell is not disagreeable, but not so strong ; it takes more plants to make a pound, because its leaf is thinner, and not so full of sap as the native. What is cultivated in the lower *Louisiana* is smaller, and not so strong ; but that made in the islands is thinner than

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that of *Louisiana*, but much stronger, and disorders the head.

In order to sow *Tobacco*, you make a bed on the best piece of ground you are master of, and give it six inches in height; this earth you beat and make level with the back of a spade; you afterwards sow the seed, which is extremely fine, nearly resembling poppy seed. It must be sown thin, and notwithstanding that attention, it often happens to be too thick. When the seed is sown, the earth is no longer stirred, but the seed is covered with ashes the thickness of a farthing, to prevent the worms from eating the *Tobacco* when it is just shooting out of the earth.

As soon as the *Tobacco* has four leaves, it is transplanted into a soil prepared for it, put into holes a foot broad made in a line, and distant three feet every way; a distance not too great, in order to weed it with ease, without breaking the leaves.

The best time for transplanting it is after rain, otherwise you must water it: In like manner, when the seed is in the earth, if it rains not, you must gently sprinkle it towards evening, because it is somewhat slow in rising, and when it is sprouted it requires a little water.

ter. You must lightly cover the plant in the day time with some leaves plucked the night before ; a precaution on no account to be dispensed with, till the young plant has fully struck root. You must also daily visit the *Tobacco*, to clear it of caterpillars, which fasten upon it, and would entirely eat it up, if they are not destroyed. The *Tobacco-Caterpillar* is of the shape of a silk-worm, has a prickle on its back towards its extremity ; its colour is of the most beautiful sea-green, striped with silver streaks ; in a word, it is as beautiful to the eye as it is fatal to the plant it is fond of.

I gave great attention to keep my plantation clear of all weeds, observing in weeding it with the hoe not to touch the stalks, about which I caused to lay new earth, as well to secure them against gusts of wind, as to enable them to draw from the earth a more abundant nourishment. When the *Tobacco* began to put forth suckers, I plucked them off, because they would have shot into branches, which would impoverish the leaves, and for the same reason stopped the *Tobacco* from shooting above the twelfth leaf, afterwards stripping off the four lowermost, which never come to any thing: Hitherto I did nothing, but what was ordinarily done by those who

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cultivate *Tobacco* with some degree of care ; but my method of proceeding afterwards was different.

I saw my neighbours strip the leaves of *Tobacco* from the stalk, string them, set them to dry, by hanging them out in the air, then put them in heaps, to make them sweat. As for me, I carefully examined the plant, and when I observed the stem begin to turn yellow here and there, I caused the stalk to be cut with a pruning-knife, and left it for some time on the earth to deaden. Afterwards it was carried off on hand-barrows, because it is thus less exposed to be broken than on the necks of Negroes. When it was brought to the house, I caused it to be hung up, with the big end of the stem turned upwards, the leaves of each stalk slightly touching one another, being well assured they would shrivel in drying, and no longer touch each other. It hereby happened, that the juice contained in the pith (sometimes as big as one's finger) of the stem of the plant, flowed into the leaves, and augmenting their sap, made them much more mild and waxy. As fast as these leaves assumed a bright chestnut colour, I stripped them from the stalk, and made them directly into bundles, which I wrapped up in a cloth, and bound it close with  
a cord

a cord for twenty-four hours; then undoing the cloth, they were tied up closer still. This *Tobacco* turned black and so waxy, that it could not be rasped in less than a year; but then it had a substance and flavour so much the more agreeable, as it never affected the head; and so I sold it for double the price of the common.

The *Cotton*, which is cultivated in *Louisiana*, is of the species of the white *Siam* \*, tho' not so soft, nor so long as the *Silk-cotton*; it is extremely white and very fine, and a very good use may be made of it. This *Cotton* is produced, not from a tree, as in the *East-Indies*, but from a plant, and thrives much better in light, than in strong and fat lands, such as those of the *Lower Louisiana*, where it is not so fine as on the high grounds.

This plant may be cultivated in lands newly cleared, and not yet proper for *Tobacco*, much less for *Indigo*, which requires a ground well worked like a garden. The seeds of

\* This *East-India annual Cotton* has been found to be much better and whiter than what is cultivated in our colonies, which is of the *Turkey* kind. Both of them keep their colour better in washing, and are whiter than the perennial *Cotton* that comes from the islands, although this last is of a longer staple.

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Cotton are planted three feet asunder, more or less according to the quality of the soil : the field is weeded at the proper season, in order to clear it of the noxious weeds, and fresh earth laid to the root of the plant, to secure it against the winds. The *Cotton* requires weeding, neither so often, nor so carefully as other plants ; and the care of gathering is the employment of young people, incapable of harder labour.

When the root of the *Cotton* is once covered with fresh earth, and the weeds are removed, it is suffered to grow without further touching it, till it arrives to maturity. Then its heads or pods open into five parts, and expose their *Cotton* to view. When the sun has dried the *Cotton* well, it is gathered in a proper manner, and conveyed into the conservatory ; after which comes on the greatest task, which is to separate it from the grain or seed to which it closely adheres ; and it is this part of the work, which disgusts the inhabitants in the cultivation of it. I contrived a mill for the purpose, tried it, and found it to succeed, so as to dispatch the work very much.

The culture of *Indigo*, *Tobacco*, and *Cotton*, may be easily carried on without any interruption

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tion to the making of *Silk*, as any one of these is no manner of hindrance to the other. In the first place, the work about these three plants does not come on, till after the worms have spun their *Silk*: in the second place, the feeding and cleaning the *silk-worm* requires no great degree of strength; and thus the care employed about them, interrupts no other sort of work, either as to time, or as to the persons employed therein. It suffices for this operation to have a person who knows how to feed and clean the worms; young Negroes of both sexes might assist this person, little skill sufficing for this purpose: the oldest of the young Negroes, when taught, might shift the worms and lay the leaves; the other young Negroes gather and fetch them; and all this labour, which takes not up the whole day, lasts only for about six weeks. It appears therefore, that the profit made of the silk is an additional benefit, so much the more profitable, as it diverts not the workmen from their ordinary tasks. If it be objected, that buildings are requisite to make silk to advantage; I answer, buildings for the purpose cost very little in a country, where wood may be had for taking; I add farther, that these buildings may be made and dawbed with mud by any persons  
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about the family ; and besides, may serve for hanging *Tobacco* in, two months after the *Silk-worms* are gone.

I own I have not seen the *Wax-tree* cultivated in *Louisiana* ; people content themselves to take the berries of this tree, without being at pains to rear it ; but as I am persuaded it would be very advantageous to make plantations of it, I shall give my sentiments on the culture proper for this tree, after the experiments I made in regard to it.

I had some seeds of the *Wax-tree* brought me to *Fentenai le Comte*, in *Poitou*, some of which I gave to several of my friends, but not one of them came up. I began to reflect, that *Poitou* not being by far so warm as *Louisiana*, these seeds would have difficulty to shoot ; I therefore thought it was necessary to supply by art the defect of nature ; I procured horse, cow, sheep, and pigeon's dung in equal quantity, all which I put in a vessel of proportionable size, and poured on them water, almost boiling, in order to dissolve their salts : this water I drew off, and steeped the grains in a sufficient quantity thereof for forty-eight hours ; after which I sowed them in a box full of good earth ; seven of them

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them came up, and made shoots between seven and eight inches high, but they were all killed by the frost for want of putting them into the green-house.

This seed having such difficulty to come up, I presume that the wax, in which it is wrapped up, hinders the moisture from penetrating into, and making its kernel shoot; and therefore I should think that those who choose to sow it, would do well if they previously rolled it lightly between two small boards just rough from the saw; this friction would cause the pellicle of wax to scale off with so much the greater facility, as it is naturally very dry; and then it might be put to steep.

Hops grow naturally in *Louisiana*, yet such as have a desire to make use of them for themselves, or sell them to Brewers, cultivate this plant. It is planted in alleys, distant asunder six feet, in holes two feet, and one foot deep, in which the root is lodged. When shot a good deal, a pole, of the size of one's arm, and between twelve and fifteen feet long, is fixed in the hole; care is had to direct the shoots towards it, which fail not to run up the pole. When the flower is ripe and yellowish,

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lowish, the stem is cut quite close to the earth and the pole pulled out, in order to pick the flowers, which are saved.

If we consider the climate of *Louisiana*, and the quality of the highlands of that province, we might easily produce *Saffron* there. The culture of this plant would be so much the more advantageous to the planters, as the neighbourhood of *Mexico* would procure a quick and useful vent for it.

CHAP.

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## CHAP. X.

*Of the Commerce that is, and may be, carried on in Louisiana. Of the Commodities which that Province may furnish in return for those of Europe. Of the Commerce of Louisiana with the Isles.*

I Have often reflected on the happiness of *France*, in the portion which Providence has allotted her in *America*. She has found in her lands neither the gold nor silver of *Mexico* and *Peru*, nor the precious stones and rich stuffs of the *East Indies*; but she will find therein, when she pleases, mines of iron, lead, and copper. She is there possessed of a fertile soil, which only requires to be occupied in order to produce, not only all the fruits necessary and agreeable to life, but also all the subjects on which human industry may exercise itself in order to supply our wants. What I have already said of *Louisiana* ought to make this very plain; but to bring the whole together, in order, and under one point of view, I shall next relate every thing that regards the *Commerce* of this province.

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*Commodities which Louisiana may furnish  
in return for those of Europe.*

*FRANCE* might draw from this colony several sorts of *Furs*, which would not be without their value, though held cheap in *France*; and by their variety, and the use that might be made of them, would yield satisfaction. Some persons have dissuaded the traders from taking any furs from the *Indians*, on a supposition that they would be moth-eaten, when carried to *New Orleans*, on account of the heat of the climate: but I am acquainted with people of the business, who know how to preserve them from such an accident.

*Dry Buffalo hides* are of sufficient value to encourage the *Indians* to procure them, especially if they were told, that only their skins and tallow were wanted; they would then kill the old bulls, which are so fat as scarce to be able to go: each buffalo would yield at least a hundred pounds of tallow; the value of which, with the skin, would make it worth their while to kill them, and thus none of our money would be sent to *Ireland* in order to have tallow from that country; besides, the species of buffaloes would not be diminished,  
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because these fat buffaloes are always the prey of wolves.

*Deer skins*, which were bought of the *Indians* at first, did not please the manufacturers of *Niort*, where they are dressed, because the *Indians* altered the quality by their way of dressing them ; but since these skins have been called for without any preparation but taking off the hair, they make more of them, and sell them cheaper than before.

The *Wax-tree* produces *Wax*, which being much drier than bees-wax, may bear mixture, which will not hinder its lasting longer than bees-wax. Some of this wax was sent to *Paris* to a factor of *Louisiana*, who set so low a price upon it as to discourage the planters from sowing any more. The sordid avarice of this factor has done a service to the islands, where it gives a higher price than that of *France*.

The islands also draw timber for building from *Louisiana*, which might in time prevent *France* from making her profits of the beauty, goodness, and quantity of wood of this province. The quality of the timber is a great inducement to build docks there for the construction of ships : the wood might be had at  
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a low price of the inhabitants, because they would get it in winter, which is almost an idle time with them. This labour would also clear the grounds, and so this timber might be had almost for nothing. *Masts* might be also had in the country, on account of the number of pines which the coast produces ; and for the same reason *Pitch* and *Tar* would be common. For the planks of ships, there is no want of oak ; but might not very good ones be made of cypress ? This wood is, indeed, softer than oak, but endowed with qualities surpassing this last : It is light, not apt to split or warp, is supple and easily worked ; in a word, it is incorruptible both in air and water ; and thus making the planks stouter than ordinary, there would be no inconvenience from the use of cypress. I have observed, that this wood is not injured by the worm, and ship-worms might, perhaps, have the same aversion to it as other worms have.

Other wood fit for the building of ships is very common in this country ; such as elm, ash, alder, and others. There are likewise in this country several species of wood, which might sell in *France* for joiners work and fineneering, as the cedar, the black walnut, and the cotton tree. Nothing more would there-

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fore be wanting for compleating ships but cordage and iron. As to hemp, it grows so strong as to be much fitter for making cables than cloth. The iron might be brought from *France*, as also sails; however, there needs only to open the iron mine at the cliffs of the *Chicafaws*, called *Prud'homme*, to set up forges, and iron will be readily had. The King, therefore, might cause all sorts of shipping to be built there at so small a charge, that a moderate expence would procure a numerous fleet. If the *English* build ships in their colonies, from which they draw great advantages, why might not we do the same in *Louisiana*?

*France* fetches a great deal of *Saltpetre* from *Holland* and *Italy*; she may draw from *Louisiana* more than she will have occasion for, if once she sets about it. The great fertility of the country is an evident proof thereof, confirmed by the avidity of cloven-footed animals to lick the earth, in all places where the torrents have broke it up: It is well known how fond these creatures are of salt. *Saltpetre* might be made there with all the ease imaginable, on account of the plenty of wood and water; it would besides be much more pure than what is commonly had, the earth not  
being

being sowed with dunghills ; and on the other hand, it would not be dearer than what is now purchased by *France* in other places.

What commerce might not be made with *Silk* ? The silk-worms might be reared with much greater success in this country than in *France*, as appears from the trials that have been made, and which I have above related.

The lands of *Louisiana* are very proper for the culture of *Saffron*, and the climate would contribute to produce it in great abundance ; and, what would still be a considerable advantage, the *Spaniards* of *Mexico*, who consume a great deal of it, would enhance its price.

I have spoken of *Hemp*, in respect to the building of ships : but such as might be built there, would never be sufficient to employ all the *Hemp*, which might be raised in that colony, did the inhabitants cultivate as much of it as they well might. But you will say, Why do they not ? My answer is, the inhabitants of this colony only follow the beaten track they have got into : but if they saw an intelligent person sow hemp without any great expence or labour, as the soil is very fit for it ; if, I say, they saw, that it thrives without weeding ; that in the winter-evenings the Negroes and  
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their children can peel it ; in a word, if they saw, that there is good profit to be had by the sale of it ; they then would all make hemp. They think and act in the same manner as to all the other articles of culture in this country.

*Cotton* is also a good commodity for commerce ; and the culture of it is attended with no difficulty. The only impediment to the culture of it in a greater quantity, is the difficulty of separating it from the seed. However, if they had mills, which would do this work with greater dispatch, the profit would considerably increase.

The *Indigo* of *Louisiana*, according to intelligent Merchants, is as good as that of the Islands ; and has even more of the copper colour. As it thrives extremely well, and yields more herb than in the Islands, as much *Indigo* may be made as there, tho' they have four cuttings, and only three in *Louisiana*. The climate is warmer in the Islands, and therefore they make four gatherings ; but the soil is drier, and produces not so much as *Louisiana* : so that the three cuttings of this last are as good as the four cuttings in the Islands.

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The *Tobacco* of this colony is so excellent, that if the commerce thereof was free, it would sell for one hundred sols and six livres the pound, so fine and delicate is its juice and flavour. *Rice* may also form a fine branch of trade. We go to the *East-Indies* for the rice we consume in *France*; and why should we draw from foreign countries, what we may have of our own countrymen? We should have it at less trouble, and with more security. Besides, as sometimes, perhaps too often, years of scarcity happen, we might always depend upon finding rice in *Louisiana*, because it is not subject to fail, an advantage which few provinces enjoy.

We may add to this commerce some drugs, used in medicine and dying. As to the first, *Louisiana* produces *Sassafras*, *Sarsaparilla*, *Esquine*, but above all the excellent balm of *Copalm*, (*Sweet-gum*) the virtues of which, if well known, would save the life of many a person. This colony also furnishes us with bears oil, which is excellent in all rheumatic pains. For dying, I find only the wood *Ayac*, or Stinking Wood, for yellow; and the *Achet-chi* for red; of the beauty of which colours we shall give an account in the third book.

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Such are the commodities, which may form a commerce of this colony with *France*, which last may carry in exchange all sorts of *European* goods and merchandize; the vent whereof is certain, as every thing answers there, where luxury reigns equally as in *France*. Flour, wines, and strong liquors sell well; and tho' I have spoken of the manner of growing wheat in this country, the inhabitants, towards the lower part of the river especially, will never grow it, any more than they will cultivate the vine, because in these sorts of work a Negroe will not earn his master half as much as in cultivating *Tobacco*; which, however, is less profitable than *Indigo*.

*The Commerce of Louisiana with the Islands.*

FROM *Louisiana* to the Islands they carry cypress wood squared for building, of different scantlings: sometimes they transport houses, all framed, and marked out, ready to set up, on landing at their place of destination.

Bricks, which cost fourteen or fifteen livres the thousand, delivered on board the ship.

Tiles for covering houses and sheds, of the same price.

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*Apalachean* beans, (*Garavanzas*,) worth ten livres the barrel, of two hundred weight.

Maiz, or *Indian* corn.

Cypress plank of ten or twelve feet.

Red peas, which cost in the country twelve or thirteen livres the barrel.

Cleaned *rice*, which costs twenty livres the barrel, of two hundred weight.

There is a great profit to be made in the islands, by carrying thither the goods I have just mentioned : this profit is generally *cent. per cent.* in returns. The shipping, which go from the colony, bring back sugar, coffee, rum, which the Negroes consume in drink ; besides other goods for the use of the country.

The ships which come from *France* to *Louisiana* put all in at *Cape François*. Sometimes there are ships, which not having a landing for *France*, because they may have been paid in money or bills of exchange, are obliged to return by *Cape François*, in order to take in their cargo for *France*.

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## C H A P. XI.

*Of the Commerce with the Spaniards.*

*The Commodities they bring to the Colony, if there is a demand for them. Of such as may be given in return, and may suit them. Reflections on the Commerce of this Province, and the great Advantage which the State and particular Persons may derive therefrom.*

*The Commerce with the Spaniards.*

THE commodities, which suit the *Spaniards*, are sufficiently known by traders, and therefore it is not necessary to give an account of them: I have likewise forebore to give the particulars of the commodities, which they carry to this Colony, tho' I know them all: that is not our present business. I shall only apprize such as shall settle in *Louisiana*, in order to traffick with the *Spaniards*, that it is not sufficient to be furnished with the principal commodities, which suit their commerce, but they should, besides, know how to make the proper assortments; which are most advantageous to us, as well as to them, when they carry them to *Mexico*.



*The Commodities, which the Spaniards bring to Louisiana, if there is a demand for them.*

*CAMPEACHY* wood, which is generally worth from ten to fifteen livres the hundred weight.

*Brasil* wood, which has a quality superior to that of *Campeachy*.

Very good *Cocoa*, which is to be met with in all the ports of *Spain*, worth between eighteen and twenty livres the quintal, or hundred weight.

*Cochineal*, which comes from *Vera Cruz* : there is no difficulty to have as much of it as one can desire, because so near ; it is worth fifteen livres the pound : there is an inferior sort, called *Sylvestre*.

*Tortoise-shell*, which is common in the *Spanish* Islands, is worth seven or eight livres the pound.

*Tanned leather*, of which they have great quantities ; that marked or stamped, is worth four livres ten sols the *leves*.

*Marroquin*, or *Spanish* leather, of which they have great quantities, and cheap.

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*Turned calf*, which is also cheap.

*Indigo*, which is manufactured at *Guatemala*, is worth three or four livres the pound : there is of it, of a perfect good quality, and therefore sells at twelve livres the pound.

*Sarsaparilla*, which they have in very great quantities, and sell at thirteen or fifteen sols.

*Havana snuff*, which is of different prices and qualities : I have seen of it at three shillings the pound, which in our money make thirty-seven sols six deniers.

*Vanilla*, which is of different prices. They have many other things very cheap, on which great profits might be made, and for which an easy vent may be found in *Europe*; especially for their drugs : but a particular detail would carry me too far, and make me lose sight of the object I had in view.

What I have just said of the commerce of *Louisiana*, may easily shew, that it will necessarily encrease in proportion as the country is peopled ; and industry also will be brought to perfection. For this purpose nothing more is requisite than some inventive and industrious genius's, who coming from *Europe*, may dif-

cover such objects of commerce, as may turn to account. I imagine that a good tanner might in this colony tan the leather of the country, and cheaper than in *France*; I even imagine, that the leather might there be brought to its perfection in less time; and what makes me think so, is, that I have heard it averred, that the *Spanish* leather is extremely good, and is never above three or four months in the tan-pit.

The same will hold of many other things, which would prevent money going out of the kingdom to foreign countries. Would it not be more suitable, and more useful, to devise means of drawing the same commodities from our own Colonies? As these means are so easy; at least money would not go out of our hands; *France* and her Colonies would be as two families, who traffick together, and render each other mutual service. Besides, there would not be occasion for so much money to carry on a commerce to *Louisiana*, seeing the inhabitants have need of *European* goods. It would therefore be a commerce very different from that, which without exporting the merchandise of the kingdom, exports the money; a commerce still very different from that, which

which carries to *France* commodities highly prejudicial to our own manufactures.

I may add to all that I have said on *Louisiana*, as one of the great advantages of this country, that women are very fruitful in it, which they attribute to the waters of the *Mississipi*. Had the intentions of the company been pursued, and their orders executed, there is no doubt but this colony had at this day been very strong, and blessed with a numerous young progeny, whom no other climate would allure to go and settle in; but being retained by the beauty of their own, they would improve its riches, and multiplied anew in a short time, could offer their mother-country succours in men and ships, and in many other things that are not to be contemned.

I cannot too much shew the importance of the succours in corn, which this colony might furnish in a time of scarcity. In a bad year we are obliged to carry our money to foreigners for corn, which has been oftentimes purchased in *France*, because they have had the secret of preserving their corn; but if the colony of *Louisiana* was once well settled, what supplies of corn might not be received from that fruitful country? I shall give two reasons which will confirm my opinion.

The first is, That the inhabitants always grow more corn than is necessary for the subsistence of themselves, their workmen, and slaves. I own, that in the lower part of the colony only rice could be had, but this is always a great supply. Now were the colony gradually settled to the *Arkansas*, they would grow wheat and rye in as great quantities as one could well desire, which would be of great service to *France* when her crops happen to fail.

The second reason is, That in this colony a scarcity is never to be apprehended. On my arrival in it, I informed myself of what had happened therein from 1700, and I myself remained in it till 1734; and since my return to *France* I have had accounts from it down to this present year 1757; and from these accounts I can aver, that no intemperature of season has caused any scarcity since the beginning of this century. I was witness to one of the severest winters that had been known in that country in the memory of the oldest people living; but provisions were then not dearer than in other years. The soil of this province being excellent, and the seasons always suitable, the provisions and other com-

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commodities cultivated in it never fail to thrive surprizingly.

One will, perhaps, be surprized to hear me promise such fine things of a country which has been reckoned to be so much inferior to the *Spanish* or *Portuguese* colonies in *America*; but such as will take the trouble to reflect on that which constitutes the genuine strength of states, and the real goodness of a country, will soon alter their opinion, and agree with me, that a country fertile in men, in productions of the earth, and in necessary metals, is infinitely preferable to countries from which men draw gold, silver, and diamonds: the first effect of which is to pamper luxury and render the people indolent; and the second to stir up the avarice of neighbouring nations. I therefore boldly aver, that *Louisiana*, well governed, would not long fail to fulfil all I have advanced about it; for though there are still some nations of *Indians* who might prove enemies to the *French*, the settlers, by their martial character, and their zeal for their King and country, aided by a few troops, commanded, above all, by good officers, who at the same time know how to command the Colonists: The settlers, I say,

will

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will be always match enough for them, and prevent any foreigners whatever from invading the country. What would therefore be the consequence if, as I have projected, the first nation that should become our enemy were attacked in the manner I have laid down in my reflections on an *Indian* war? They would be directly brought to such a pass as to make all other nations tremble at the very name of the *French*, and to be ever cautious of making war upon them. Not to mention the advantage there is in carrying on wars in this manner; for as they cost little, as little do they hazard the loss of lives.

In 1734 M. *Perier*, Governor of *Louisiana*, was relieved by M. *de Biainville*, and the King's plantation put on a new footing, by an arrangement suitable to the notions of the person who advised it. A sycophant, who wanted to make his court to Cardinal *Fleury*, would persuade that Minister, that the plantation cost his Majesty ten thousand livres a year, and that this sum might be well saved; but took care not to tell his Eminence, that for these ten thousand it saved at least fifty thousand livres.

Upon this, my place of Director of the public plantations was abolished, and I at length resolved



resolved to quit the colony and return to *France*, notwithstanding all the fair promises and warm sollicitations of my superiors to prevail upon me to stay. A King's ship, *La Gironde*, being ready to sail, I went down the river in her to *Balise*, and from thence we set sail, on the 10th of *May*, 1734. We had tolerable fine weather to the mouth of the *Bahama* Streights; afterwards we had the wind contrary, which retarded our voyage for a week about the Banks of *Newfoundland*, to which we are obliged to stretch for a wind to carry us to *France*: From thence we made the passage without any cross accident, and happily arrived in the road of *Chaidbois* before *Rochelle*, on the 25th of *June* following, which made it a passage of forty-five days from *Louisiana* to *France*.

*Some Abstracts from the Historical  
Memoirs of Louisiana, by M. Du  
Mont.*

I.

*Of Tobacco, with the way of cultivating  
and curing it.*

THE Lands of *Louisiana* are as proper, as could be desired, for the culture of *Tobacco*; and, without despising what is made in other countries, we may affirm, that the tobacco, which grows in the country of the *Natchez*, is even preferable to that of *Virginia* or *St. Domingo*. I say, in the country of the *Natchez*, because the soil at that Post appears to be more suitable to this plant than any other; altho' it must be owned, that there is but very little difference betwixt the tobacco, which grows there and in some other parts of the Colony, as at the *Cut-point*, at the *Natchitoches*, and even at *New Orleans*; but whether it is owing to the exposure, or to the goodness of the soil, it is allowed, that the tobacco of the *Natchez* and *Tafous* is preferable to the rest.

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The way of planting and curing tobacco in this country, is as follows: They sow it on beds well worked with the hoe or spade in the months of *December, January, or February*; and because the seed is very small, they mix it with ashes, that it may be thinner sowed: Then they rake the beds, and trample them with their feet, or clap them with a plank, that the seed may take sooner in the ground. The tobacco does not come up till a month afterwards, or even for a longer time; and then they ought to take great care to cover the beds with straw or cypress-bark, to preserve the plants from the white frosts, that are very common in that season. There are two sorts of tobacco; the one with a long and sharp-pointed leaf, the other has a round and hairy leaf; which last they reckon the best sort.

At the end of *April*, and about *St. George's* day, the plants have about four leaves, and then they pull the best and strongest of them: These they plant out on their tobacco-ground by a line stretched across it, and at three feet distance one from another: This they do either with a planting-stick, or with their finger, leaving a hole on one side of the plant, to receive the water, with which they ought to water it. The tobacco being thus planted,  
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it should be looked over evening and morning, in order to destroy a black worm, which eats the bud of the plant, and afterwards buries itself in the ground. If any of the plants are ate by this worm, you must set another one by it. You must choose a rainy season to plant your tobacco, and you should water it three times to make it take root. But they never work their ground in this country to plant their tobacco; they reckon it sufficient to stir it a little about four inches square round the plant.

When the tobacco is about four or five inches high, they weed it, and clean the ground all about it, and hill up every plant. They do the same again, when it is about a foot and a half high. And when the plant has about eight or nine leaves, and is ready to put forth a stalk, they nip off the top, which they call *topping* the tobacco: This amputation makes the leaves grow longer and thicker. After this, you must look over every plant, and every leaf, in order to *sucker* it, or to pull off the buds, which grow at the joints of the leaves; and at the same time you must destroy the large green worms that are found on the tobacco, which are often as large

large as a man's finger, and would eat up the whole plant in a night's time.

After this, you must take care to have ready a *hanger* (or *tabacco-house*,) which in *Louisiana* they make in the following manner: They set several posts in the ground, at equal distances from one another, and lay a beam or plate on the top of them, making thus the form of a house of an oblong square. In the middle of this square they set up two forks, about one third higher than the posts, and lay a pole cross them, for the ridge-pole of the building; upon which they nail the rafters, and cover them with cypress-bark, or palmetto-leaves. The first settlers likewise build their dwelling-houses in this manner, which answer the purpose very well, and as well as the houses which their carpenters build for them, especially for the curing of tobacco; which they hang in these houses upon sticks or canes, laid across the building, and about four feet and a half asunder, one above another.

The tobacco-house being ready, you wait till your tobacco is ripe, and fit to be cut; which you may know by the leaves being brittle, and easily broke between the fingers,  
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especially in the morning before sun-rising ; but those versed in it know when the tobacco is fit to cut by the looks of it, and at first sight. You cut your tobacco with a knife, as nigh the ground as you can, after which you lay it upon the ground for some time, that the leaves may *fall*, or grow tender, and not break in carrying. When you carry your tobacco to the house, you hang it first at the top by pairs, or two plants together, thus continuing from story to story, taking care that the plants thus hung, are about two inches asunder, and that they do not touch one another, lest they should rot. In this manner they fill their whole house with tobacco, and leave it to sweat and dry.

After the tobacco is cut, they weed and clean the ground on which it grew : Each root then puts out several suckers, which are all pulled off, and only one of the best is left to grow, of which the same care is taken of the first crop. By this means a second crop is made on the same ground, and sometimes a third. These *seconds*, indeed, as they are called, do not usually grow so high as the first plant, but notwithstanding they make very good tobacco \*.

\* This is an advantage that they have in Louisiana over

If you have a mind to make your tobacco into rolls, there is no occasion to wait till the leaves are perfectly dry; but as soon as they have acquired a yellowish brown colour, altho' the stem is green, you unhang your tobacco, and strip the leaves from the stalks, lay them up in heaps, and cover them with woollen cloths, in order to sweat them. Af-

our tobacco planters, who are prohibited by law to cultivate these *seconds*; the summers are so short, that they do not come to due maturity, in our tobacco Colonies; whereas in *Louisiana* the summers are two or three months longer, by which they make two or three crops of tobacco a year upon the same ground, as easily as we make one. Add to this, their fresh lands will produce three times as much of that commodity, as our old plantations; which are now worn out with culture, by supplying the whole world almost with tobacco for a hundred and fifty years. Now if their tobacco is worth five and six shillings a pound, as we are told above, or even the tenth part of it, when ours is worth but two pence or three pence, and they give a bounty upon ships going to the *Mississipi*, when our tobacco is loaded with a duty equal to seven times its prime cost; they may, with all these advantages, soon get this trade from us, the only one this nation has left entire to itself. These advantages enable the planters to give a much better price for servants and slaves, and thereby to engross the trade. It was by these means, that the *French* got the sugar trade from us, after the Treaty of *Utrecht*, by being allowed to transport their people from *St. Christopher's* to the rich and fresh lands of *St. Domingo*; and by removing from *Canada* to *Louisiana*, they may in the like manner get not only this but every other branch of the trade of *North America*.

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ter that you *stem* the tobacco, or pull out the middle rib of the leaf, which you throw away with the stalks, as good for nothing ; laying by the longest and largest of the leaves, that are of a good blackish brown colour, and keep them for a covering for your rolls. After this you take a piece of coarse linen cloth, at least eight inches broad and a foot long, which you spread on the ground, and on it lay the large leaves you have picked out, and the others over them in handfuls, taking care always to have more in the middle than at the ends : Then you roll the tobacco up in the cloth, tying it in the middle and at each end. When you have made a sufficient number of these bundles, the Negroes roll them up as hard as they can with a cord about as big as the little finger, which is commonly about fifteen or sixteen iathom long : You tighten them three times, so as to make them as hard as possible ; and to keep them so, you tie them up with a string.

But since the time of the *West India* Company, we have seldom cured our tobacco in this manner, if it is not for our own use ; we now cure it in hands, or bundles of the leaves, which they pack in hogheads, and deliver it thus in *France* to the Farmers General. In  
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order to cure the tobacco in this manner, they wait till the leaves of the stem are perfectly dry, and in moist, giving weather, they strip the leaves from the stalk, till they have a handful of them, called a *hand*, or bundle of tobacco, which they tie up with another leaf. These bundles they lay in heaps, in order to sweat them, for which purpose they cover those heaps with blankets, and lay boards or planks over them. But you should take care that the tobacco is not over-heated, and does not take fire, which may easily happen ; for which purpose you uncover your heaps from time to time, and give the tobacco air, by spreading it abroad. This you continue to do till you find no more heat in the tobacco ; then you pack it in hogheads, and may transport it any where, without danger either of its heating or rotting.

## II.

*Of the way of making Indigo.*

THE blue stone, known by the name of Indigo, is the extract of a plant, of which they who have a sufficient number of slaves to manage it, make some quantities throughout all this colony. For this purpose they  
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first weed the ground, and make small holes in it with a hoe, about five inches asunder, and on a straight line. In each of these holes they put five or six seeds of the indigo, which are small, long, and hard. When they come up, they put forth leaves somewhat like those of box, but a little longer and broader, and not so thick and indented. When the plant is five or six inches high, they take care to loosen the earth about the root, and at the same time to weed it. They reckon it has acquired a proper maturity, when it is about three feet and a half high : this you may likewise know, if the leaf cracks as you squeeze the plant in your hand.

Before you cut it, you get ready a place that is covered, in the same manner with the one made for tobacco, about twenty-five feet high ; in which you put three vats, one above another, as it were in different stories, so that the highest is the largest ; that in the middle is square, and the deepest ; the third, at bottom, is the least.

After these operations, you cut the indigo, and when you have several arms-full, or bundles of the plant, to the quantity judged necessary for one working, you fill the

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the vat at least three quarters full; after which you pour water thereon up to the brim, and the plant is left to steep, in order to rot it; which is the reason why this vat is called the *rotting-tub*. For the three or four hours which the plant takes to rot, the water is impregnated with its virtue; and, tho' the plant is green, communicates there-to a blue colour.

At the bottom of the great vat, and where it bears on the one in the middle (which, as was said, is square) is a pretty large hole, stopped with a bung; which is opened when the plant is thought to be sufficiently rotten, and all the water of this vat, mixed with the mud, formed by the rotting of the plant, falls by this hole into the second vat; on the edges of which are placed, at proper distances, forks of iron or wood, on which large long poles are laid, which reach from the two sides to the middle of the water in the vat; the end plunged in the water is furnished with a bucket without a bottom. A number of slaves lay hold on these poles, by the end which is out of the water; and alternately pulling them down, and then letting the buckets fall into the vat, they thus continue to beat the water; which being  
thus

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thus agitated and churned, comes to be covered with a white and thick scum ; and in such quantity as that it would rise up and flow over the brim of the vat, if the operator did not take care to throw in, from time to time, some fish-oil, which he sprinkles with a feather upon this scum. For these reasons this vat is called the *battery*.

They continue to beat the water for an hour and a half, or two hours ; after which they give over, and the water is left to settle. However, they from time to time open three holes, which are placed at proper distances from top to bottom in one of the sides of this second vat, in order to let the water run off clear. This is repeated for three several times ; but when at the third time the muddy water is ready to come out at the lowermost hole, they stop it, and open another pierced in the lower part of that side, which rests on the third vat. Then all the muddy water falls thro' that hole of the second vat into the third, which is the least, and is called the *deviling* (*diablotin*.)

They have sacks, a foot long, made of a pretty close cloth, which they fill with this liquid thick matter, and hang them on nails round the indigo-house. The water drains

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out gradually ; and the matter which is left behind, resembles a real mud, which they take out of these sacks, and put in moulds, made like little drawers, two feet long by half a foot broad, and with a border, or ledge, an inch and a half high. Then they lay them out in the sun, which draws off all the moisture ; and as this mud comes to dry, care is taken to work it with a mason's trowel : At length it forms a body, which holds together, and is cut in pieces, while fresh, with wire. It is in this manner that they draw from a green herb this fine blue colour, of which there are two sorts, one of which is of a purple dove colour.

### III.

*Of Tar ; the way of making it ; and of making it into Pitch.*

I HAVE said, that they made a great deal of tar in this colony, from pines and firs ; which is done in the following manner. It is a common mistake, that tar is nothing but the sap or gum of the pine, drawn from the tree by incision ; the largest trees would not yield two pounds by this method ; and if it were to be made in that manner, you must

must choose the most thriving and flourishing trees for the purpose; whereas it is only made from the trees that are old, and are beginning to decay, because the older they are, the greater quantities they contain of that fat bituminous substance, which yields tar; it is even proper that the tree should be felled a long time, before they use them for this purpose. It is usually towards the mouth of the river, and along the sea-coasts, that they make tar; because it is in those places that the pines chiefly grow.

When they have a sufficient number of these trees, that are fit for the purpose, they saw them in cuts with a cross-cut-saw, about two feet in length; and while the slaves are employed in sawing them, others split these cuts lengthwise into small pieces, the smaller the better. They sometimes spend three or four months in cutting and preparing the trees in this manner. In the mean time they make a square hollow in the ground, four or five feet broad, and five or six inches deep: From one side of which goes off a canal, or gutter, which discharges itself into a large and pretty deep pit, at the distance of a few paces. From this pit proceeds another canal, which communicates with a second



cond pit ; and even from the first square you may make three or four such trenches, which discharge themselves into as many pits, according to the quantity of wood you have, or the quantity of tar you imagine you may draw from it. Then you lay over the square hole four or five pretty strong bars of iron, and upon these bars you arrange cross-wise the split pieces of pine, of which you should have a quantity ready ; laying them so, that there may be a little air between them. In this manner you raise a large and high pyramid of the wood, and when it is finished, you set fire to it at the top. As the wood burns, the fire melts the resin in the pine, and this liquid tar distills into the square hole, and from thence runs into the pits, made to receive it.

If you would make pitch of this tar, take two or three red-hot cannon bullets, and throw them into the pits, full of the tar, which you intend for this purpose : Immediately upon which, the tar takes fire with a terrible noise and a horrible thick smoke, by which the moisture that may remain in the tar is consumed and dissipated, and the mass diminishes in proportion ; and when they think it is sufficiently burnt, they ex-

tinguish the fire, not with water, but with a hurdle covered with turf and earth. As it grows cold, it becomes hard and shining, so that you cannot take it out of the pits, but by cutting it with an axe.

## IV.

*Of the Mines of Louisiana.*

BEFORE we quit this subject, I shall conclude this account by answering a question, which has often been proposed to me. Are there any *Mines*, say they, in this province? There are, without all dispute; and that is so certain, and so well known, that they who have any knowledge of this country, never once called it in question. And it is allowed by all, that there are to be found in this country quarries of Plaster of *Paris*, slate, and very fine veined marble; and I have learned from one of my friends, who as well as myself had been a great way on discoveries, that in travelling this province he had found a place full of fine stones of rock-crystal. As for my share, I can affirm, without endeavouring to impose on any one, that in one of my excursions I found, upon the river of the *Arkansas*, a rivulet that rolled down

down with its waters gold-dust ; from which there is reason to believe, that there are mines of this metal in that country. And as for silver-mines, there is no doubt but they might be found there, as well as in *New Mexico*, on which this province borders. A *Canadian* traveller, named *Bon Homme*, as he was hunting at some distance from the Post of the *Nachitoches*, melted some parcels of a mine, that is found in rocks at a very little distance from that Post, which appeared to be very good silver, without any farther purification \*.

It will be objected to me, perhaps, that if there is any truth in what I advance, I should have come from that country laden with silver and gold ; and that if these precious metals are to be found there, as I have said, it is surprizing, that the *French* have never thought of discovering and digging them in thirty years, in which they have been settled in *Louisiana*. To this I answer, that this objection is only founded on the ignorance of those who make it ; and that a traveller, or an officer, ordered by his superiors to go to reconnoitre the country, to draw plans, and to give an account of what

\* See a farther account and assay of this mine above.

he has seen, in nothing but immense woods and deserts, where they cannot so much as find a path, but what is made by the wild beasts; I say, that such people have enough to do to take care of themselves and of their present business, instead of gathering riches; and think it sufficient, that they return in a whole skin.

With regard to the negligence that the *French* seem hitherto to have shewn in searching for these mines, and in digging them, we ought to take due notice, that in order to open a silver-mine, for example, you must advance at least a hundred thousand crowns, before you can expect to get a penny of profit from it, and that the people in the country are not in a condition to be at any such charge. Add to this, that the inhabitants are too ignorant of these mines: the *Spaniards*, their neighbours, are too discrete to teach them; and the *French* in *Europe* are too backward and timorous to engage in such an undertaking. But notwithstanding, it is certain that the thing has been already done, and that just reasons, without doubt, but different from an impossibility, have caused it to be laid aside.

This

This Author gives a like account of the culture of *Rice* in *Louisiana*, and of all the other staple commodities of our colonies in *North America*.

*Extract from a late French Writer,  
concerning the importance of Louisiana to France.*

“ONE cannot help lamenting the lethargic state of that colony, (*Louisiana*,) which carries in its bosom the bed of the greatest riches; and in order to produce them, asks only arms proper for tilling the earth, which is wholly disposed to yield an hundred fold. Thanks to the fertility of our islands, our *Sugar* plantations are infinitely superior to those of the *English*, and we likewise excel them in our productions of *Indigo*, *Coffee*, and *Cotton*.

“*Tobacco* is the only production of the earth which gives the *English* an advantage over us. Providence, which reserved for us the discovery of *Louisiana*, has given us the possession of it, that we may be their rivals in this particular, or at least that we may be able to do without their *Tobacco*. Ought we to continue tributaries to them in this re-

spect,

spect, when we can so easily do without them?

“ I cannot help remarking here, that among several projects presented of late years for giving new force to this Colony, a company of creditable Merchants proposed to furnish Negroes to the inhabitants, and to be paid for them in *Tobacco* alone at a fixed valuation.

“ The following advantages, they demonstrated, would attend their scheme. I. It would increase a branch of Commerce in *France*, which affords subsistence to two of the *English* Colonies in *America*, namely *Virginia* and *Maryland*, the inhabitants of which consume annually a very considerable quantity of *English* stuffs, and employ a great number of ships in the transportation of their *Tobacco*. The inhabitants of those two provinces are so greatly multiplied, in consequence of the riches they have acquired by their commerce with us, that they begin to spread themselves upon territories that belong to us. II. The second advantage arising from the scheme would be, to carry the cultivation of *Tobacco* to its greatest extent and perfection. III. To diminish in proportion the cultivation of the *English* Plantations, as  
well



well as lessen their navigation in that part.

IV. To put an end entirely to the importation of any *Tobacco* from *Great Britain* into *France*, in the space of twelve years. V. To diminish annually, and in the same space of time finally to put an end to, the exportation of specie from *France* to *Great Britain*, which amounts annually to five millions of our money for the purchase of *Tobacco*, and the freightage of *English* ships, which bring it into our ports. VI. By diminishing the cause of the outgoing of specie, to augment the ballance of Commerce in favour of this nation. These are the principal advantages which *France* would have reason to have expected from the establishment of this company, if it had been effected." *Essai sur les Interêts du Commerce Maritime, par M. du Haye. 1754.*

The probability of succeeding in such a scheme, will appear from the foregoing accounts of *Tobacco* in *Louisiana*, pag. 319, 331, 348, 353, &c. They only want hands to make any quantities of *Tobacco* in *Louisiana*. The consequences of that will appear from the following account.

An



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*An Account of the quantity of Tobacco imported into Britain, and exported from it, in the four years of Peace, after the late Tobacco-law took place, according to the Custom-house Accounts.*

|                            | Imported<br>Hhds.   | Exported<br>Hhds. |
|----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| England, {                 | 752 --- 55,997 ---  | 48,922            |
|                            | 1753 --- 70,925 --- | 57,353            |
|                            | 1754 --- 59,744 --- | 50,476            |
|                            | 1755 --- 71,881 --- | 54,384            |
|                            | <u>258,547</u> ---  | <u>211,135</u>    |
| Scotland, {                | 1752 --- 22,322 --- | 21,642            |
|                            | 1753 --- 26,210 --- | 24,728            |
|                            | 1754 --- 22,334 --- | 21,764            |
|                            | 1755 --- 20,698 --- | 19,711            |
|                            | <u>91,564</u>       | <u>87,845</u>     |
| Total -                    | 350,111 ---         | 298,980           |
| Average -                  | 87,528 ---          | 74,745            |
| Imported yearly -          | hhd                 | 87,528            |
| Exported -                 | -                   | <u>74,745</u>     |
| Home consumption ---       |                     | 12,783            |
| To 87,528 hhd              | at 10l. per hhd.    | £875,280          |
| To Duty on 12,783 hhd.     | at 20l.             | <u>255,660</u>    |
| Annual Income from Tobacco |                     | 1,130,940         |

The number of seamen employed in the Tobacco trade is computed at 4500; --- in the Sugar trade 3600; --- and in the Fishery of Newfoundland 4000, from Britain.

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